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Founder

K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAO



Editors

Dr. BHAVARAJU NARASIMHA RAO

C. V. N. DHAN

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WHAT IS CULTURE?

DR. SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

When the word "Culture" is uttered, there is a tendency in some quarters to confound it with something highbrow and affected. It is apt to be regarded as something apart from daily life and its struggles and limitations. It is now and then confused with some special mode of dress or certain forms of speech or some habits of thought by assuming which its professors are supposed to behave differently from the rest of humanity. No doubt, culture has its charlatans and pretenders as have most arts and philosophies. But rightly understood, culture is more and no less than the art of living an enlightened life and it may be justly claimed for it as by the Stoic Emperor that nothing that appertains to humanity is foreign to it. Voltaire ends his most famous story depicting the chequered adventures of a philosopher in search of happiness and the El Dorado with the words "Let us cultivate our gardens", meaning thereby that in the actual and joyous fulfilment of the daily work in the right spirit and with the right perspective, lies true culture and true happiness. It is on such aspects that I propose to dwell for a few moments in the talk which I have been privileged to give today by the courtesy of the All India Radio.

Not many days ago, I was asked to give a message to the graduates of the Travancore University after they had received their degrees and on that occasion I referred to a passage from the *Taittiriya* Upanishad as summarising the elements of true culture. The passage exhorts the students of those days who emerged from their pupilage in the Indian Forest Universities to speak the truth and do their daily duty and adds that there should be no neglect of daily reading, daily reflection and daily teaching; but it does not stop there. For, the Upanishad proceeds to emphasise that there should be no neglect of efficiency and skill of bodily alertness or of worldly affairs and no turning

away from those means that lead to worldly prosperity. It is impossible to recapture the rhythm and the impressiveness of the original but my object in adverting to the old scripture was to point out the many-sidedness and the composite character of true culture as here envisaged.

Culture or cultivation is not a matter of acquiring an accent or a knowledge of language. It does not need the acquisition of any jargon, artistic or otherwise. It should not be confused with a display of superiority or incomprehensibility.

Culture is not solely based on wide reading or scholarship though these are often associated with it. Some of the most conspicuous exponents and examples of culture, the Lord Buddha, for instance, and Socrates were probably not versed in book lore. It does not only mean the appreciation and enjoyment of art in its manifold forms, though it is difficult to conceive of a person as truly who is not responsive to the appeal of great architecture, of statuary and painting of the inspiration of music. What is required and demanded to the cultured individual is not that he has learnt much and filled his mind and soul but the harmonious result on him of the influences of nature, art and literature as well as of life. One of the greatest of poets has defined the right attitude of a human being towards life and life's problems as comprehended in the words "Ripeness is all." This ripeness excludes not merely crudeness of thought and behaviour but all extremes of conduct and judgement. It is incommensurate with sanctimonious hypocrisy or that intolerance which avers that my doxy is orthodoxy and yours heterodoxy. A most important and formative element in culture is the concourse and friendship of men that matter. Landor puts into the mouth of Pericles the sentiment that the festival of life would have been incomplete in his own case if he had not lived with such men as his contemporaries, the great poets, dramatists and philosophers of Greece and enjoyed their familiarity and esteem and thus fitted himself to be a faithful guardian of Greek destinies.

With all these elements, moreover, has to be joined that which perhaps is most needed at this time and that which in the classic Apology of Socrates is strongly advocated, namely, that a life without investigation is not worthy for a man to live.

I have cited these examples for the purpose of illustrating how true culture has been viewed by some of the greatest men who have lived. It were best perhaps to describe it succinctly, not so much as a possession of this gift, or the other, as the adoption and maintenance of a certain special

attitude towards this life and the life beyond. A cultured man seeks to acquire knowledge, both the knowledge of power and the knowledge of beauty. His emotions are trained and refined by the study of high literature and the contemplation of great works of art ; but he refrains from mere academic theorising or lofty aloofness. Culture which does not involve contacts with life and all its roughnesses and smoothnesses is a plant without a root. This is the reason why the seer in the Upanishad insists on efficiency in the ordinary duties of life as a *sine qua non* of culture. Such contacts will alone enable the possessor to be free from that worst form of intolerance which is intellectual arrogance and self-segregation.

There is also the danger that a too exclusive addition either to the sciences or the arts produces a fanaticism which may be as deleterious as the fanaticism of the ultra-doctrinaire. The avoidance of such lopsidedness was sought to be produced in ancient India by the insistence of the householder living the normal life and earning his living and supporting his family before he betook himself to the things of the spirit. A full life is a condition precedent to the supreme culture of renunciation.

The art of expounding one's ideas was again and again emphasised both in ancient Greece and in ancient India, firstly because truth and knowledge are always the better for propagation and also because true wisdom can never be tested and examined unless the process of discussion and argument accompanies it. One of the dangers of the modern system is that over-specialisation has become an accompaniment of scientific and philosophic development. The biologist intent upon the study of micro-organisms, the chemist in his laboratory and even the astronomer among the stars tends to lose a sense of perspective and proportion—a loss which is no less characteristic of the strenuous politician and the official or administrator engrossed in his particular matter. Each of these is apt to regard his work as the fulcrum of existence ; and a corrective has always to be applied to the views and ideals of such persons.

One of the main reasons for the catastrophic developments that we are now witnessing in the world is perhaps the exclusive and aggressive devotion of the scientist to his *forte* and the pre-occupation of the teachers of the world with the non-moral aspects of education. Not less baneful has been the narrowly commercial and economic outlook that has produced the universal and illogical craze of self-sufficiency, whereby a small group of nations endeavours to produce everything for itself and to sell as much as possible to its neighbours and at the same time

to keep out everything from outside. Specialisation, narrowness, exploitation, the deliberate ignoring of the neighbour's point of view have all been exemplified in the present conflict and are, in the opinion of many that count, the result of wrong national education and the absence of true culture. In the ultimate analysis, therefore, culture involves and implies a vivid awareness of the meaning of life, a conspectus of the world's problems in the proper order and relative importance and the deliberate choice of the things that are really worth while.

Religion, as distinguished from dogma or specific creed, must be an integral part of all true culture, a religion which will not descend to posturing or fanaticism, which will be constantly aware of the great forces that mould the destinies of the world and will yet be wholly consistent with charity, comprehension and tolerance and a mellow understanding of the drawbacks and handicaps of oneself and society; a religion which may perhaps be best described as a constant and instructed criticism of life and a constant understanding of the difficulties of one's neighbours. To strive for the best and yet be content with what alone is often attainable, namely, the second best—this should be the mark of the truly cultivated person.

Let me endeavour to summarise the essentials of culture by invoking the words of a modern poet who is not as well-known as he should be :

“ To things, not phantoms, let us cleave—
 The gains of science, the gifts of art :
 The sense of oneness with our kind ;
 The thirst to know and understand
 A large and liberal discontent,
 These are the goods in life's rich hand
 The things that are more excellent. ”

(*A Broadcast Talk. 1940*)

VIVEKANANDA'S VEDANTIC SOCIALISM

PROF. K. VENKATA REDDY

Swami Vivekananda is generally approached as a patriot-monk *par excellence*. He is simply credited with revealing the soul of India to the Western world. He is mostly regarded as a spokesman of Hinduism. The spiritual dimension of his personality seems to have obviously got the better of the social. It looks as though the "Vivekananda" was drowned under the heavy weight of the "Swami".

Although he was a man of religion and meditation, Vivekananda was all for activity that would lead to increase in production and the removal of poverty. He always said with his Guru, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, that "religion is not for empty stomachs." He shocked people out of their self-complacency and plunged them into action. Thus, he influenced the course of life in modern India by stimulating the Rajasic qualities in the Indian people, and getting them to set about the task of betterment of their material conditions of life rather than get lost in a soporific religion that produced contentment with their existing life of poverty and degradation. In Vivekananda's opinion, religion had to be the principal and leading force in implementing all social changes in India.

No doubt, Vivekananda took pride in the country's inheritance from the past, but he was not an obscurantist revivalist with indiscriminating admiration for all that had come down from the past. To him, India meant the people and the people meant the masses. Removal of poverty, eradication of illiteracy, restoration of human dignity, freedom from fear, availability of spiritual and secular knowledge to all, irrespective of their caste and class and the ending of all monopolies, religious, economic, intellectual, social and cultural—all these formed a part of what he derived from his practical Vedanta or Vedantic socialism.

Through his re-interpretation of Vedanta, and his deep concern for the masses and their problems, Vivekananda gave the country a new lease of life. Raising his voice against colonial and feudal oppression, Vivekananda searched, at the same time, for an answer to the question of India's historical destinies, of the ways and means of transforming it into a wealthy, strong and independent state. He insistently repeated that India could be roused and rebuilt with the help of small groups of enthusiastic patriots, strong and courageous with "muscles of iron and nerves of steel and gigantic wills".

Though not in politics, Vivekananda did exert a visible influence on the political development and on the modern India that has emerged from this development. In a sense, he was politically far ahead of his time in the importance he attached to the masses, the indignation he displayed on their exploitation, the genuine concern he had for the uplift of women and the backward classes and, above all, in his strong desire for the country to get the benefit of Western science and technology for its development without falling into the trap of slavish imitation of the Western ways of life. The revolutionary ideas he propounded had a tremendous influence on subsequent political thinking and action in India, especially on the mass-dynamism of Mahatma Gandhi and the socialistic ideas of Jawaharlal Nehru.

Vivekananda was not against reforms, but he believed that India needed radical reforms. In his book, "On India and Her Problems", he wrote: "Remember that the nation lives in the cottages. But, alas, nobody ever did anything for them. Our modern reformers are very busy about widow-remarriage. Of course, I am a sympathiser in every reform, but the fate of a nation does not depend upon the number of husbands the widows get, but upon the condition of the masses". Vivekananda went a step further and said, "So long as millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor." He sincerely believed that the only hope of India was from the masses, for the upper classes were physically and morally dead. He believed that a time would come when the masses would rise, throw off the dominance of the upper classes and establish their absolute supremacy.

With his own concept of Vedanta, Vivekananda gave the country the secularist ideal that now forms a part of the Constitution of modern India. It was he who first proclaimed on world platforms that all religions were but different paths that led to the same goal. His idea of secularism was, in fact, an

advance of what is found in modern India. He wanted not just mutual tolerance but mutual respect and, what is more, mutual recognition of the basic truth that underlies all individual religions.

Vivekananda's understanding of Vedanta made him a total opponent to the practice of untouchability. Denouncing, as he did, the practice of untouchability, Vivekananda anticipated, by several decades, the more effective campaign that Gandhi and Ambedkar carried on against this social evil. He found neither religious sanction nor secular logic behind the terrible practice of untouchability and he went all out to condemn it.

Vivekananda's Vedantic socialism centres round his progressive ideas on education which are more modern than those of professional educationists who moulded the education of modern India. From the beginning of his mission, he stressed the importance of universal literacy as an essential condition for mass uplift and development. Furthermore, he had conceived of so many decades back what we now call informal education. Also, the credit for pioneering the programme of universal adult literacy should go to Vivekananda. He also laid great stress on industrial training and technical education which have now become a part of the educational system of modern India. What he wanted was man-making education. He believed that education should aim at developing the mind rather than stuff it with bookish knowledge. He wanted education to include all aspects of life, not only the intellectual but also the physical, social, cultural and spiritual, and lead to the building of character and the adoption of a fearless and self-reliant attitude towards life.

Though he laid great stress on the traditional values of chastity and family life for women, Vivekananda was totally against their subjection. While drawing attention to the prominent place occupied by women in intellectual field in ancient India, he blamed the priestcraft for relegating women to a backward position by denying them equal rights with men in education and in knowledge of the scriptures. He passionately pleaded for the extension of all educational facilities to women.

Vivekananda's Vedantic socialism is also reflected in his endeavour to give India's traditional religions a new orientation of social service. By establishing the Ramakrishna Mission, he gave an altogether new direction to the role of monks and Sanyasins in Indian society. As a result, for the first time in Indian history, we have the Hindu monks who do not isolate themselves from society, but actively concern themselves with its service and betterment. They have set up educational

institutions, hospitals, dispensaries, orphanages and other social institutions for alleviating human suffering. They are also in the forefront in the work of relief and rehabilitation whenever the country suffers natural disasters such as drought, floods, cyclones and epidemics.

Thus, with his reinterpretation of Vedanta, Swami Vivekananda played a key role in the shaping of modern India. Socialism, secularism, mass uplift and mass power, abolition of untouchability, universal literacy, informal education, women's liberation and inculcation of social service as a part of religious worship — these constituted the quintessence of his "Vedantic socialism". His sociological views played a positive role in the development of the patriotic and national self-consciousness of the youth of India. Vivekananda's clamant call to the Indian youth — "Awake, arise, and stop not till the goal is reached" — is resounding all through India, rousing their social consciousness and kindling their damp spirits.

THE SAVIOUR

(Free adaptation from Telugu Bhagavatam by Bammara Potana)

M. RAMAKRISHNA RAO

Like a noble lion, you have arrived on the scene just in time
To save us from the venomous demon who dourly commits
all crime :

He groomed his henchmen and helped their heads to get
swollen

And they, like mad dogs, had all the good men bitten;

But now they are held in leash by your intentions keen

To protect the meek, meritorious and the clean;

The glory of your ability shall in gold be written

To guide the people with foresight and commission;

You have kept the self-seeking devils out of commission

Making our little world a peaceful place to live in;

This is our humble prayer to the Lord in Heaven

To bless you with more success and happiness. Amen!

DESIRE AND DEATH IN ANITA DESAI'S "CRY, THE PEACOCK"

DR. K. C. BARAL

AND

MRS. C. K. NAIK

The essence of art is to reveal truth; the truth about the complexities of life, about the founding and nurturing of individual character. Every creative artist attempts to chart out human life through ramifications of thought, action, and conflict, what is according to Geoffrey Hartman: "An intermediate middle between over-specified poles always threatening to collapse it. The poles may be birth and death, father and mother, heaven and earth, first things and last things".¹ Evidently, creative art masquerades the complex human nature as the simulacrum of revealed or natural truth. As one of the leading contemporary Indo-Anglian novelists, Anita Desai's claim to explore such truth is pertinent. She says: "If art has any purpose, then it is to show one, bravely and uncompromisingly, the plain face of truth... Once you have told the truth, you have broken free of society, of its prisons. You have entered the realm of freedom".² The basic aesthetic concern of Desai is goaded by the said contention in all her works. She is careful in exploring the inner reality of her fictional characters, always ill at ease with the outside reality. Between the poles of "life" and "death", she probes into the complex inter-personal relationships vis-a-vis the self's exclusive yearnings. Desai's highly acclaimed novel, *Cry, The Peacock*, (1968) is a work in that direction. As a complex psychological work, the novel "gives expression to the long smothered wail of a lacerated psyche, the harrowing tale of blunted human relationship being told by the chief protagonist herself".³ As a very sensitive soul Maya, the protagonist, is caught in a crisis of irreconcilable realities.

Cry, The Peacock as a novel is both poetic and intensely evocative. It is the story of a woman in which her sufferings are very often wrought upon our feelings. The narrative attempts to unfold Maya's personality and character through her encounter with realities both "within" and "without". She counters reality with reality : a pattern in which the past mingles in the present and desire into death. While justifying the title of the novel, the allusion to the mating of the peacocks in the wild signifies the conceptual dimensions of both "desire" and "death", and thus sets the tone and the texture of the work :

Do you not hear the peacocks' call in the wild? Are they not blood-chilling, their shrieks of pain? "*Pia Pia*", they cry. "Lover, lover, Mio, mio. I die, I die..." Have you seen peacocks make love, child? Before they mate, they fight. They will rip each other's breasts to strips and fall, bleeding with their beaks open and panting. When they have exhausted themselves in battle, they will mate. Peacocks are wise. The hundred eyes upon their tails have seen the truth of life and death, and know them to be one. Living, they are aware of death. Dying they are in love with life. (Page 95) *

With extraordinary sensitiveness, Desai underlines the truth about life and death. What is true in case of the peacocks is also true in case of the human beings. We are aware of death while living and are in love with life while dying. Between life and death, it is love, grounded in the physical and moving beyond, that makes life meaningful.

"Death" as an inevitable fact of life is Maya's truth ; her painful reality. She is obsessed with it. The Albine priest's prediction of death during the fourth year of her marriage has become an unconscious fixation threatening her with an unexplained terror. Gautam's understanding of death is scriptural and in his actions and relations with Maya, he projects a counterpoint of view. Having an indulgent and somewhat over-protective childhood, Maya is an introvert woman. Like the embryo in the womb she looks forward for a warm and secured habitation after her marriage. Unfortunately, she enters into a reality that shatters her dream of a comfortable life ; instead plunges her into neglect and tension. Her husband ignores Maya's needs and considers her emotions as that of a spoilt child.

* All quotations are taken from Anita Desai's *Cry, The Peacock*, Delhi : Orient Paperback. 1980.

DESIRE AND DEATH IN ANITA DESAI'S "CRY, THE PEACOCK" 15

The first two unequal chapters of the novel deal with actual death of the pet dog Toto and of Maya's husband Gautam. The novel opens at the death of the pet, the very death that has made Maya inconsolable as she felt that her last straw of attachment is snatched away: "Childless women develop fanatic attachment to their pets...." (P 10) Maya's childlessness haunts her for which the death of the pet immensely anguished her. She does not feel the same on the death of her husband, Gautam who was indifferent to life. There is no real bond between them. Finally, it is her own disappearance into silence and darkness that puts the lid on all her physical and mental agonies, thus allowing her to enter into the world of freedom. Maya identifies herself with the peacocks and experiences life and death meaning to be the same:

It was I, I who screamed with the peacocks,
screamed at the sight of the rain clouds,
screamed at their disappearance, screamed in
mute horror. (P. 98)

Maya's scream is not reciprocated nor heard by her lover. In the absence of love, she becomes intensely lonely and alienated. Her philosophically detached husband totally ignores her physical needs.

As Maya demures:

How little he knew of my suffering, or how to comfort me...Telling me to go to sleep while he worked at his papers, he did not give another thought to me, to either the soft, willing body or the lonely, wanting mind that waited near his bed. (p. 9)

For gratification of body's needs, Maya, within the permissible limits of the society, can look forward to her husband. Gautam's lack of understanding and viewing love "with its accompanying horror of copulation" as disgusting, left Maya wanting and unfulfilled. Both Maya and Gautam are ranged against each other on the issue of physical sex. When Maya wanted to involve him in her world, she is rebuffed being considered as childish, boring and distasteful. Maya's childlessness is obvious as physical consummation with her husband eludes her. She is not strong enough to rebel against physical and emotional deprivations. She suffers her fate and naturally gives expression to the ungratified emotions as hysteric feats what Gautam considers as the symptoms of madness natural to a spoilt child. There is no real bond between them as Maya confesses: "Had there been a bond between us, we would have felt its pull...But, of course,

there was none...there was no bond, no love — hardly any love.” (p. 108). Desai, in fact puts the theme of attachment and detachment both from earthly and spiritual angles into focus in the novel placing Maya and Gautam in contrapuntal positions. For Maya, her love is something that Gautam not only distastes but fears. She says: “I love you. I want you. Because I insist being with you, being allowed to touch you. You can’t bear it, can you? No. You are afraid. You might perish”. (p. 113) Like the peacock, Maya wants to bleed and fulfil her desire in physical union.

Gautam addresses Maya as “Neurotic”. “Neurotic, that’s what you are” (p. 115) and considers her understanding of life as fairy tale illusion. It is Gautam who is squarely responsible for driving Maya mad. However, the novel goes beyond. Desai attempts to bring into focus what Herman Hesse did in his novel *Siddharth*, delineating the physical and the spiritual modes of life’s aspirations. In a subdued manner, Desai wants to say what had been said by Hesse that the physical aspect cannot be totally ignored, instead it is the means and the medium for the spiritual. Gautam who indulgently quotes from *Gita* and explains the theory of *Karma* blissfully ignores his marital responsibility towards his wife: an unquestionable command of the theory of *Karma*.

Most critics deal with the theme of *Cry, The Peacock* from existential alienation to the philosophical concepts concerning death and detachment as advocated by *Bhagavad Gita*. However, most of them ignore the fact of “desire” and its necessary fulfilment as a process of life leading to meaningful death. The symbols, images and frequent allusions to the body and to the needs of the body make compulsive insistence to consider desire as an important factor. It is “desire” in its physical sense evidently becomes pertinent and crucial to the overall development of the plot. Maya’s happy childhood, her marriage with its changed reality and relations are significant for her suffering and for its resultant effects. The concept of “desire”, therefore, is inter-linked with the concept of “death” in the novel. Because endless repetitions of desire suppressed by guilt and frustration ultimately lead to the fantasy of death as absolute pleasure.

“Desire” according to Malcolm Bowie, is our *Natura naturans*.⁴ Conceptually “desire” has wider implications; described as the cosmological principle of our secular age. Normally, it is interpreted at two levels: high moving towards “sublimation” and low representing the purely physical aspects. However, the physical is essentially important for generating the possibility of moving towards sublimation. Philosophers such

as Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Foucault and psychologists like Freud, Havelock Ellis, Kraft-Ebing have variously dealt with the concept. It is only in the writings of Freud that the subject-matter of "desire" has received serious attention, particularly in his *Three Essays on Sexuality* and in *Meta-psychological Essays*.

Human action, Freud believed, is conducted by sexuality.⁵ He identified that the manifest mental phenomenon is to be the expression of a wish or impulse which is unconscious or repressed. This repressed impulse is identified with the sexual impulse. "Desire" as manifest sexual impulse and its gratification is the most important organismic need. Any disruption of the normal course of gratification results in neurotic manifestations. In the course of the narrative of the novel, it is clear that Maya undergoes a situation of sexual deprivation and emotional insecurity. Gautam's accusation that she is a neurotic has substance, ironically himself failing to understand the possible sources of the syndrome. As the rational antithesis of Maya, Gautam considers her childhood to be a delusion what on the contrary she considers to be her happiest years. For Maya, her marriage has displaced her from a world of security and happiness. Further, it has been a perpetuation of a shattered world where wish fulfilment is denied to her. Husband's love and sexual gratification in a normal course would have been the compensation to overcome the loss of childhood world. On the contrary, Maya's new surrounding does not help compensate the loss, instead allows her to drift. The childhood prophecy of a disaster becomes an obvious point of fixation in Maya's unconscious: "It was so clear now, so magically clear, the disturbing memory, half-remembered, had turned to a vision of albino eyes, of dyed finger nails pointing at my forehead, at the stars, and its reality was as unmistakable as that of the white moon". (p. 32)

Allusions from astrology and scriptures have strengthened the narrative and have enlarged the understanding of life and death. Maya's preoccupation with death is not for death's sake, it is understood to be a means to freedom and escape from suffering. Much as painful, Maya's neglect has perpetually threatened her mental stability:

It was Gautam who found many more things to teach that heart, new, strange and painful things. He taught it pain, for there are countless nights when I have had been tortured by a humiliating sense of neglect, of loneliness of desperation that would not have existed had I not loved him so, had he not meant so much. (p. 201)

Maya has tried her best to love Gautam but her love never has been reciprocated. Maya's agony has got internalised without ensuring a possible means of release. In her agony Maya can only visualise the shadow of death: "In the shadows I saw peacocks dancing, the thousand eyes upon their shimmering feathers gazing steadfastly, unwinkingly upon the final truth — Death. I heard their cry and echoed it. I felt their thirst as they gazed at the rain clouds, their passion as they hunted for their mates. With them I trembled and panted and paced the burning rocks. Agony, agony, the mortal agony of their cry for lover and for death." (p. 96) Maya's emotional and physical frustrations are deep, leading her to a state of nervous breakdown.

Neurosis as an outcome of ungratified desire highlights the relation between belief (or amnesia) and desire. Conceptually, "desire" defines psychic mobility as well as transformation. According to psycho-analysis, ordinary belief may be related to desire either in one or two ways. The first is pre-suppositional relation in which the belief gives rise to or conditions the object of desire. The second is instrumental relation, where the belief determines how the desire may be satisfied. Belief, desire and action are ordinarily related so that given the belief and the desire the action is determined, or conversely, a given action can be explained by reference to the concomitant belief and desire. The psychoanalytic explanations are very much relevant in the context of *Cry, The Peacock*. The Albino priest's prediction of death in the fourth year of Maya's marriage is belief continued in the state of amnesia in her mind till she feels totally disillusioned in her marriage with Gautam. The death consciousness therefore is an outcome of her failure in terms of physical gratification. Apart from the sexual gratification, it is indeed true that Maya unconsciously attempts to get rid of her death obsession by reproduction. However, reproduction as a means of overcoming the death wish is also hindered. The actions of both Maya and Gautam in their understanding of issues such as life, death, love and above all the interpersonal relationship opposite determinants without ever having the possibility of a meeting point. Therefore, the so-called instrumental relation facilitating gratification of desire could not be concretised in case of Maya.

Normally, in the course of psychic mobility the incompatibility of reality with our desiring imagination makes the negation of desire inevitable. But to deny desire is not to eliminate it; in fact, such denials multiply the appearances of each desire

in the self's history. In denying a desire we condemn ourselves in finding it everywhere. As Maya says, "But I cannot, I cannot remember. I place my face in my hands and try to force my memory. I repeat half-forgotten, mnemonic words from my childhood—'It cannot be altered: you must accept'. Those are the only words I can recall from that period and they pursue me closer to the end of the long tunnel that I must traverse." (p. 177) Maya is unable to have her happy childhood recreated in a house where everything is determined by others for her. She is caught between two worlds: one lost permanently and the other unbearable, both physically and emotionally. She is aware of her failing health and pities herself: "My blouses hang on me, my rings slip off my fingers. Those are no longer my eyes, nor this is my mouth." (p. 179) Along with physical deterioration, all order has gone out of Maya's life. There is no plan, no peace, nothing to keep her within the pattern of day-to-day living and doing. Maya has entered into another world, the world of insanity as she claims.

Repressed desire is repeated, disguised and sublimated. Its appearance in various forms at different levels of mental life create the intelligible structures of psychic continuities. Either in disguised or in manifested form, desire affects an individual personality or character. Psychological consequence of sublimated desire may be transformed into suicidal melancholy. In our sublimations, our desires never die; therefore death is not only an escape from the present but also is a form of sublimated desire. Thus endless repetition of desires ultimately lead to the fantasy of death and to the realm of absolute pleasure.

Both Gautam and Maya talk about death. Maya refuses to ignore this world where Gautam advocates a detached view. For him the real man of wisdom is "he who is free from all attachment neither rejoices in receiving the good nor is vexed on receiving evil, his wisdom is well established." Gautam defends his indifference to feeling and to attachment on the line of the *Gita*. On the other hand, Maya belongs to this world and she wants to live her full life. Desperately, therefore, she needs either the father, the brother or the husband for support. Her desperate call is not listened by anyone of them: "Father! Brother! Husband! Who is my saviour? I am in need of one. I am dying. God, let me sleep, forget rest. But no, I will not rest again. There is no rest any more—only death and waiting." (p. 98) Because the frustration of her married life

is so disturbing that she feels to have been imprisoned in a veritable hell: "It was mine that was hell. Torture, guilt, dread, imprisonment—these were the four walls of my private hell, one that no one could survive in long. Death was certain."

For Maya, death would possibly provide the freedom from her desiring that is associated with Gautam. She longs the life that would permit her to "touch him, feel his flesh and hair, hold and tighten her hold on him" (p. 102) This desiring of Maya is hindered and she is left to an existence where she is thoroughly tired in the shuttle back and forth of events, thoughts, incidents. Past, future and present lose their significance for her. The only intention of continuing her life is to wait for the climax—death. Time for her, like murder, is an arrow-head embeded in her flesh, rusted, corroding, searing.

The reference to death wish gradually has changed from a pathological expression to a sublimated desire. Maya wants to sleep permanently not to be disturbed or to be waken up again. Whether there is after life or not, has not enthused her at all because for her this life has been intensely unbearable. After Gautam's death when she is removed to her parental house she ultimately returns to her childhood world. Perhaps there is restoration of the happy world to Maya at a time when all meaning has gone out of her life. Still there is the patter of the child's "laughter cascading up and down the scales of some new delight—brilliant peacock's feather perhaps." (pp. 217-18) She is totally unconcerned about the world around her. Now, perhaps she does not want to call upon God, as she did once, to give her another heart to bear all her sorrow. She waits only for grace:

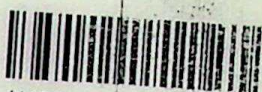
I might, after all, have achieved the way to grace,

Had you but granted me a few years more, O Lord. (p. 177)

The two worlds—one of grace and the other of madness—closed in finally. Desire got sublimated and Maya entered into the realm of freedom. And the rest is silence.

NOTES

1. Quoted from *Contemporary Literary Critics* by Elmer Berkland. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977. p. 247.
2. Anita Desai, "A Secret Connivance" in *TLS*, p. 976
3. R. S. Pathak "The Alienated Self in the Novels of Anita Dasai" p. 18
4. Malcolm Bowie, *Freud. Boust and Lacan: Theory as Fiction*, London: Cambridge University Press. 1987. p. 323
5. Richard Wollheim. *Freud*. Glasgow: Fontana, 1975. p. 135



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FORM AND FLOW

R. K. SINGH

The dance about light
humming mosquitoes
in the evening
grief can't be trimmed
if stings are deep :
night lurks on concerns
of the day between
surpluses and scarcities
I scratch tissues
of impairing events
or bite the curly language
to redeem hollow inside
dread of dying sun
and insects outside conspire
against wind that burrs the leaves
of years (or spiders' net
in annually-cleaned corners?)
shacked up, in a shambles now
stamped with mosquitoes' blood
my palms conceal failures
I can never erase.
I can't recover light
buried in a grave :
it's difficult
to keep form and flow.

The Theme of Death in Whitman's Poetry

J. L. CHAMUNDESWARI DEVI

Every poet worth the name, gives a distinguishing place to the theme of death in his poetry. Not only that, it is by the importance given to the theme of death, one can understand the poet's outlook of life. Walt Whitman, who is praised as the "Organic Voice" of America, portrays death as the "Strong Deliveress" which offers deliverance to human beings and he also personifies death, calling her as a "dark mother."

No doubt, the death of Abraham Lincoln moved the poet's heart. In the suffering and death of his dear leader the poet's anguished heart experienced the suffering and death of so many soldiers he had himself witnessed. That's why says Spillar, "In giving his love to his dear leader, he gave it to mankind."

In his well known poem "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," Whitman invites death in this way :

"Come lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world serenely arriving, arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later delicate death."

Thus he realizes the universal significance and necessity of death. The poet, therefore, glorifies death and sings joyously the song of death. After realizing the mystic truth behind death, the poet dances with joy and he salutes to death and he adorns death with his carols of joy.

The mystical insight which he acquired through this elegy is that he could rise above his personal grief for his beloved hero and could visualise the thousands of soldiers who had suffered and died in the Civil War. So, at the end of the poem the poet becomes aware of all human tragedy and realizes that those who were killed in the Civil War are fully at rest, while it is their surviving relatives and friends who suffer. The following lines lessen the intensity of the poet's grief :

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human life and enriches them with perfection and purity. Nobody can escape from death. So we should welcome death as our friend, which gives us new life. This is the message of Walt Whitman to humanity.

Whitman overjoys when he gains "insight" into the real nature of death as a result of his mystical journey. He realizes the mystic truth — "The eternity of life." He is not afraid of death. This is so because he has realized the mystic truth that death is not the end of life. Rather it is a birth into eternal life. What is called life is "But the leaving of many deaths."

Whitman is not only a poet of rebellion, but also a poet of cheerful optimism. A zest for life characterizes all his utterance. Such is his optimism that he conceives of death itself, not as an end, but as a rebirth into a better life.

A Rainy Night

KRISHNA PACHEGAONKAR

Dark, wet trees part for my lantern. I hear
the hushed applause of rain on leaves, and
follow the welcome carpet of light unrolled
from the open door across soft grass. Smoke
pours down from the chimney to embrace me.
Wet leaves cling to my boots. Two rabbits
dance back and forth like happy children
and a face pale as the moon peers from
the door in greeting.

MARRIAGE PROCESSION

(SHORT STORY)

MUNSHI PREM CHAND

TRANSLATED FROM HINDI BY MADAN GUPTA

Today Babu Devkinath is going to get married again after deserting his wife he had married fifteen years ago. Friends and relations are all gathered. No one has bothered to ask why this injustice is being done to a helpless woman. The reason is that they do not wish to incur the displeasure of Babu Devkinath. Women inside the house are singing songs sung at weddings. Outside preparations are afoot for the marriage procession to start. Members of the marriage party are busy getting ready. Leveried servants are moving here and there. No one is the least concerned that this marriage will ruin an innocent human being's life.

Fifteen years ago Devkinath had married Phoolwati. She was educated, well-mannered, beautiful and intelligent. Devkinath himself was a stable, well-brought-up man. On the first day of the marriage, however, an unpleasantness took place which created a gulf between the two. As time passed, this gulf widened so much so that today Devkinath was going to have a second marriage.

And what was the cause of the unpleasantness? Basically opposing views on fundamentals. Devkinath was a believer in the cultural values of the older generation which demanded restraint, patience, subservience to elders, observance of purdah. Phoolwati was a supporter of the new generation which asserted right to equality, freedom of expression and a dominant voice in affairs. Devkinath wanted Phoolwati to look after his mother and be subservient to her. He wanted her to observe purdah and not to go out without his mother's permission. Phoolwati objected to all this. The result was that long arguments took place between the two which, with the passage of time, took the

shape of rows. The husband abused his in-laws. The wife gave tit-for-tat. The husband reprimanded. The wife left the house and went to her parents. The place was not far. Within ten minutes she was at her father's house. After months of separation and tension, a reconciliation was brought about. Phoolwati returned to her husband's house. But before long the same old scenes started repeating themselves. Neither Devkinath nor Phoolwati were prepared to change their views and their ways. When the second separation took place, there was no communication for years. The intervention of well-intentioned relations persuaded Devkinath to bring Phoolwati back again. Then there was a permanent breach. Neither Devkinath sent for Phoolwati nor did she come back on her own. Today the husband is going to avenge himself by acquiring another wife. Has Phoolwati the same freedom? And would Devkinath have dared to think of marrying again if Phoolwati had that freedom?

Devkinath's mother is arranging the ornaments in a box. She is jubilant at the prospect of a new daughter-in-law. She had heard that the girl was intelligent, respectful, docile and shy. She was certain that her coming will light up the household. Her neighbours used to tease her: "The new daughter-in-law must be highly educated." The mother used to retort: "I do not want a Mem Sahib. Enough of educated girls. This time I want an illiterate."

Munshiji came to the door and announced that it was time for the train and that they should hurry. The mother replied, "Mind your work. As far as I am concerned everything is ready. Call the tailor and ask him to dress up the bridegroom."

The tailor came. The bridegroom was dressed. The "mali" put on the "sehra". The shoe-maker came with a new pair of shoes. The uncle put the last touches on the turban. The aunt came and put "surma" in the eyes. By the time they all finished their rituals, the bridegroom looked like a monkey. Forty-five years of his age were showing. Greyness had invaded the hair. Some teeth had become loose. The face had wrinkles. But the bridegroom's attitude was as if he was in the prime of youth.

When Phoolwati's father got the news, he was plunged in sorrow. If he had known earlier he would have tried for a reconciliation. Now when the marriage party was ready to leave, there was hardly any time to act. He thought "The lower castes are better than us. They at least fear the wrath

of the community. We have become shameless. Phoolwati... she has spent the life of a widow these fifteen years... And now this calamity... How will she be able to bear it?"

Phoolwati was the type of woman who never wavered once she decided to do something. If she had curbed her independent spirit, she could have led a life of comfort. Even the hardships of the last fifteen years could not conquer her. As soon as she got the news, she decided that as long as she is alive, she will not let the marriage take place — never: "He cannot revel with a new wife while I languish in misery," she said to herself. He will have to spend his days also as a stranger to peace. I shall never let this marriage take place."

Without saying anything to anyone, Phoolwati quietly left the house, hired a tonga and went to her husband's house. On the way she was thinking "I shall show to the world today that India still has women who are prepared to sacrifice their lives for a cause — women for whom principles have precedence over personal pleasure..." It looked as if she was in a delirium. Sometime she started laughing for no reason. Then she started crying. And all this time she was mumbling something. In this delirious state she did not realise that she had left her husband's house far behind. When she regained her senses a little, she asked the tonga driver where they were. He told her that they were in "katra."

"Why have you come all the way here?" she asked, "I have to go to Sabzi Mandi."

"Why didn't you say so earlier?" said the driver, "We left that behind. Don't you know where you want to go?"

"I somehow missed it," she replied.

"Had you gone off to sleep or something," said the tonga driver.

"You have made me take this long route unnecessarily."

"No need for all this talk," Phoolwati said sharply, "Turn back." In half an hour the tonga was in front of Devkinath's house.

...

...

...

The marriage procession was ready. The bridegroom had got seated in a flower decorated car. The band was playing. Phoolwati was indignant and felt like jumping into a well and ending her life. Then she thought, why shouldn't she also marry again and show her husband what she is capable of. She let this thought pass as it would be a slur on womanhood and on her family. Then she decided that she will not allow the marriage procession to move even if it meant her death.

The car was about to move. Phoolwati got out of the tonga and came and stood in front of the car. Devkinath saw her and was furious.

“Who has asked you to come here?” he shouted, “Why have you come?”

Phoolwati turned around and said, “I did not need an invitation.”

Devkinath : Get out of my sight. I don't want to see your face again.

Phoolwati : You cannot marry again.

Devkinath : And you will stop me?

Phoolwati : Either I shall stop you or die trying it.

Devkinath : Go and take some poison if you want to die, or jump into a well. If you can't do that, go and marry someone or elope with someone. I will not stand in your way. I swear. But leave me alone. I have wasted half my life for you. I can tolerate this no longer. Get out of my way or I shall run you over.

Phoolwati : This is also what I want. Go over my dead body and marry.

Devkinath : What is it that you want? Do you expect me to spend the rest of my life like this? It is a sin even to see your face — a woman who is her husband's enemy.

Phoolwati : I haven't come here to show you my face.

Devkinath : I know women like you well. Why are you putting on this show? Why don't you go and get into someone's bed? That's what you want.

Phoolwati's blood oozed out of her eyes. She shouted, “Bridle your tongue. I can tolerate everything but a slur on my character. My curse can be your ruin.

Devkinath said taunting, “Look at this respectable woman!”

Phoolwati : What right have the unfaithful to expect faithfulness from others?

Devkinath came out of the car and said, “Will you get out of the way or not?”

Phoolwati replied with firmness, “No. I will not.”

Devkinath was besides himself with rage. He shouted, “Get out of the way or I shall crush you under the car's wheels and end your bravado.”

Phoolwati : I have already said that I can bear everything but insult. You are free to do what you like.

Devkinath : Don't force me to kill you. Get out of the way.

Phoolwati : Why are you wasting your time ? I have come determined that while I am alive I shall not let you marry again.

Devkinath : Haven't I told you to get married also ? I can give you a separation right now. You don't have to live alone because of me.

Phoolwati : Another marriage for me is unthinkable. And I shall under no circumstance let you marry again till I am alive. This cruelty I shall not let you inflict on me.

Devkinath lost control over himself. Shouting, he said to the driver, "Drive on. We shall face the consequences. She can't subdue me." The driver did not wish to risk his own life by knowingly running over someone. He refused and getting out of the car walked away. Phoolwati shouted, "You want to intimidate me by talking of death. What does life hold for me that I should be afraid of dying ? Only they fear death who live a life of luxury. I have nothing except desolation before me. I have come ready to die." Devkinath's anger had by now reached the stage where a man is blinded by wrath and loses control over himself. He did not want a defeat at the hands of a woman in front of all that gathering. Getting into the car he blew the horn persistently. For a moment Phoolwati looked surprised and retraced a step or two as if moved by a sense of self-preservation. But then she regained control over herself and came right in front of the car and lay in front of it. This was the last weapon in her armoury. The horn sounded again. Phoolwati did not move. Her eyes were closed. The horn blew a third time. The car started moving. As it went ahead a shriek arose. Phoolwati's delicate body lay trembling on the ground like the tampered with strings of a sitar.

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The scene was gruesome, barbarous, ghastly, heart-rending. Onlookers standing around got into the grip of a maddening fury. Human nature when provoked goes to extremes. It does what normal human beings seldom do. In the grip of uncontrollable anger, the crowd of hundreds descended on the car seeking revenge. Devkinath was dragged out. They attacked him like wild beasts. Within minutes the bridegroom lay on the road bleeding profusely and breathing his last breath.

Two bodies lay side by side. Both were lifeless and limp. Who could say who was the murderer and who the murdered !

Late in the night two funerals took place. Instead of music and merriment, there was groaning and grief. This was the new marriage procession.

POVERTY

TIRUVALLUVAR

Translated from Tamil by R. Sundaresan

What can be as miserable as poverty?

Only poverty can be.

He who is afflicted by poverty

can have no happiness

either in this birth or in the next.

He who is poverty-afflicted

will lose the age-old fame and nobility of his heredity.

Even a man of high birth

will frame on his lips words indecent

if his mind is troubled by poverty.

The misery of poverty

changes into and leads to

the multi-dimensional miseries of life.

A man of shameful poverty

may expound the subtlest sense of a rare work

but he will go unheard, unheeded.

Even mother

disregards his poverty-afflicted son

as a stranger.

He who undergoes the rigours of poverty

is chilled to the bone,

when he thinks

whether poverty that literally killed him yesterday

will visit him even today.

Inside fire man can sleep

but impossible is it

to have a wink of sleep in poverty.

Strong-willed may be a man to renounce the world

but he renounced not

for he is still fond of his gruel and salt.

THE ELIZABETHAN THEATRE

DR. D. ANJANEYULU

What exactly do we mean by the Elizabethan Theatre? Apparently the theatre that was in vogue during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, who was admittedly the most famous monarch of England, who reigned before Queen Victoria (of the 19th century). For the present, let us leave Elizabeth II, the queen regnant, out of this discussion.

Elizabeth I, born in 1533, succeeded to the throne of England in 1558 and reigned her kingdom (or queensdom, if you like) till her death in 1603. But we know that she was the author, neither of the theatre (and the stage) nor of the plays produced during her time. William Shakespeare was not only the greatest but the best-known playwright of her time. Not that there were not many other gifted playwrights during this period. There were quite a few, like Beaumont and Fletcher, Thomas Kyd, Webster, Ben Jonson and Christopher Morlowe, Dekker, Massingar and many others. Most of them were more learned than he. But to us, at this distance of time and place, they are known only as the contemporaries of Shakespeare.

William Shakespeare was born in 1564 and died in 1616. The latter part of his life was spent during the reign of King James I, who succeeded Queen Elizabeth in 1603 and was on the throne till 1625, when he died. The stage of this time, especially during the latter part, was called the "Jacobean stage" by literary historians. The older Elizabethan and Jacobean stage traditions were weakened by the closing of the theatres in 1642, under the Puritan Revolution, when Oliver Cromwell and his men came to power. The Elizabethan Theatre can, therefore, be roughly described, for the sake of convenience, as the kind of theatre functioning in the last couple of decades of the 16th century and the first decade or two of the 17th century. This broadly corresponds more to the lifetime of Shakespeare than that of Queen Elizabeth.

Let us also remember, in this connection, that Shakespeare was essentially a theatre man, a player rather than a scholar (which in those days meant learned in the classics, i. e., Latin and Greek). Not surprising, therefore, that his learned contemporary, Ben Jonson, spoke of him derisively as one knowing "small Latin and less Greek". The English universities of those days, Oxford and Cambridge, were virtually schools of divinity, with intensive courses in the classical languages. Shakespeare, who thrived on his wits and knowledge of the world more than other things, amply demonstrated by his own example that neither elaborate training in divinity nor a deep knowledge of the classics was indispensable for a successful playwright.

In the text of his plays, Shakespeare makes frequent references to the stage and the globe. In *As you like it*, for instance, he says, through one of his characters, the philosophic Jacques :

"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players: They have their exits and their entrances; and one man in his time plays many parts."

Here the philosopher in him might be thinking of the world at large and the stage as its symbol in a capsule. But the playwright in him might be having before his mind's eye one of the Elizabethan Theatres, in which there were doors for exits and entrances; and for want of an adequate number of hands, one actor had to take several roles. We also learn from stage history that a number of new theatres were built in the last quarter of the 16th century and the early years of the 17th century. They include the Theatre and the Curtain in 1576, the Rose in 1587, the Swan in 1595, the Globe in 1598, the Fortune in 1599, the Red Bull about 1605 and the Hope in 1613.

Shakespeare, it may be safely presumed, was quite familiar with the construction of some, if not all, of them. We may find clear signs of his knowledge of this activity in *Henry IV Part I* (Act I, Scene 2). We find Lord Randolph saying in a lengthy passage (in blank verse) :

"...When we mean to build, we first survey the plot, then draw the model, and when we see the figure of the house (playhouse, let us imagine) then must we rate the cost of the erection

The plot of situation and the model, consent upon a sure foundation, etc., etc."

As an actor himself (taking the role of the ghost in *Hamlet*), Shakespeare, and the company of which he was a member, shared the evolving traditions and accumulated experience of about three centuries of continuous acting. But the permanent structure for a theatre came a little later, after the growth of London and the court under the tudors and groups of actors, like strolling players (*Cardinal Wolsey's Men* and the like) performed in different places. When we first hear of theatres in London we find them in the form of inn-yards, adapted with a stage, located in the outskirts, upon the main roads leading to the city. That was the position of actors' troupes before the days of Shakespeare, during the first two decades of the reign of Elizabeth. It suited both the sides : for the plays brought custom to the inn, adding to its attractions, while the inn was a convenient home for the players, with a ready-made audience and a ready-made playhouse.

This gradually led to the occupation of the entire inn for the role use of the actors, with permanent stages and "scaffolds" or stands for the spectators. The next logical step was the erection of the new building, specially meant for and exclusively used by, a theatre. Small financiers like John Brayne, in co-operation with actors like his brother-in-law James Burbage (also manager of a troupe) started the business in right earnest. Basically, the new theatres followed the traditional pattern in their structure. The inn-yard, surrounded by a gallery leading to guest chambers, was the foundation of its plan. The circular shape of the Globe (in Southwark) was a distinct improvement, suggested by the bull-baiting ring, with its greater convenience for seating and viewing.

Members of Shakespeare company, patronised successively by Lord Hudson (then Lord Chamberlain) and his son, later by King James himself, were relatively prosperous. They included Richard Burbage, leading tragic actor; William Kempe, the comedy actor; and John Heminge and Henry Candell, the editors-to-be of the first folio edition of Shakespeare's plays. The Globe Theatre was built (in 1598) on the Bankside at the joint expense of the chief members of the company, including Shakespeare. After ten years, the company had two theatres — the Black Froars, an indoor theatre, better adopted for winter performances, as well as the Globe, unroofed and open to the sky, more suitable for summer use.

A more picturesque textual reference, oblique though, to the shape and structure of the Globe Theatre could be found

in the prologue to *The Life of King Henry V*, in which the Chorus says, addressing the spectators as a whole :

“ But pardon, gentles all;

The flat unraised spirits, that hath dar'd, on this unworthy scaffold, to bring forth so great an object. Can this cockpit hold the vasty fields of France? Or may we consume within this wooden O the very casques that did affright the air at Agincourt)? ”

Apart from such oblique reference by way of internal evidence, we have to depend on some contemporary drawings for our knowledge of the Elizabethan stage. The drawing by Johannes de witt (or a copy thereof) of the Swan Theatre shows a building containing three covered galleries, around an open yard, each gallery having three rows of seats. A stage is built out into the yard, partly covered at the rear, the covering being supported by two pillars; there are two doors at the rear of the stage, and a balcony over them, accommodating spectators or musicians. At the top there is a small covered building, from which flies a flag bearing the device of a swan.

From contemporary references, we come to know that the Globe was built of timber on brick foundation and was thatched. After the fire in 1613, the new building was tiled, but the structure was still of timber.

In general structure, the Globe appears to have been much like the Swan. Its height was 34 feet to the caves; it was 84 feet between the walls and the width of the yard was 58 feet. The yard was lower than the street level and must have sloped towards the stage, which projected into it for 29 feet and was about four feet high. The shape of the building, according to an American research scholar, John Crawford Adams, was probably octagonal, because that was the more economical method of building. There were roofed galleries around the yard, with three rows of seats in each; the windows in the exterior were at three levels.

There were two entrances only to the building — one for the spectators, which admitted into the yard, and another for the actors, which admitted to the tiring-house and the stage. The price of admission was a penny, paid by everyone on entry, entailing the spectator to stand in the pit. If he wanted to sit in the gallery, he had to pay another penny as he entered the gallery staircase, which entitled him a seat in the third gallery. He could, if he or she so chose, sit in the first or second gallery, with its covered seats for a third penny.

On each side of the stage, there were "gentlemen's room" (may be corresponding to the latter day boxes) in the first and second galleries, the admission to which was twelve pence. People could enter by the tiring-house door for a place on the stage, or for a seat in the gentlemen's rooms, or in the balconies over the stage, if not required for the action of the play. Spectators occupying part of the stage was not a convenient practice. The total number of spectators, when the house was full, was probably over 2,000, or a little more, according to liberal estimates.

The Stage : The term "proscenium" was the Greek name for the space in which the actors played. It is the proper name for what we call the stage, which is strictly the space where the scene is set.

The pennies taken by the door-keeper were for the actors, while the money taken by the "gatherers" was for the house-keepers as rent for the theatre. At a later date the actors shared in the gallery takings. There were no tickets for admission and no reserved places. The pennies were dropped into a box : hence the "Box-office".

There were no programmes (i. e., papers or booklets giving information about the story, the cast and other details). Written or printed play-bills were put up outside the theatre, on posts throughout the city, and in the taverns and inns (as is the practice in our hotels today). Usually a different play was performed every day. Performances started at 2-00 p. m. and lasted for about two hours. A flag was flown from the turret, when a play was to be performed, and a trumpeter stood on the turret or hut at the top of the building and announced the performance, the play starting after the third sounding (like our third bell) now-a-days.

The building of the Globe Theatre had obviously a great impact on Shakespeare's life as a dramatist and on his mode of writing. For he wrote plays only for production on the stage (not for reading, as some of the later writers did — like Oscar Wilde, Pirandello, Eugene O'Neill and others). He had settled conditions, knew the players and most probably rehearsed his plays with them.

The stage hangings, if black, would be premonitory of a tragedy, if gay, with mythological tapestry of a comedy. Behind the curtain of the inner stage stood some actor peeping out to estimate the audience as it gathered. There might be the

poet too in the tiring-room, awaiting the fate of his play. "Stage Keepers" were there to give mechanical help and the "book-holder" or prompter sat there with his prompt-copy, close to the inner stage. The play was introduced by a "Prologue," dressed in a black cloak, to pray for a favourable reception "to piece out on imperfections with youth thoughts" (as in *Henry V*).

The practice of having intervals grew up with the development of music given by the boys of the "private" theatres, an overture and between the acts, and spread to the "public" theatres in later years.

The Epilogue followed, generally some character in the play, to seek applauses. The audience was apt to give clear indications of its views during the play.

It was a famous playwright of a later period, the 19th century, Oscar Wilde, who said, when asked about the audience response to the first night of his play, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, replied: "The play was a thundering success: but the audience was a total failure."

A good response to the Epilogue would, understandably, reassure the actors. It was followed in the "Public" theatres by an after-piece, called a jig — comical opera, slapstick variety, to amuse the audience and send them home in a merry mood.

As for the actors, there are one or two features peculiar to the Elizabethan stage, and worth remembering in reading the plays of Shakespeare.

One is the playing of the female roles by the boys or the younger members of troupe. With the Restoration, however, women became, as in France, members of the companies. The young spectator, as Macaulay put it, could now see "with emotions unknown to the contemporaries of Shakespeare and Jonson tender and sprightly heroines presented by lovely women". Maybe to that extent, the process of willing suspension of disbelief spoken of by Coleridge would have become easier, even superfluous, for that matter.

Closely connected with this is the device of the play within the play, e. g., Hecuba in *Hamlet*, Pyramus and Thisbe in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* — and that of women being disguised as men as in *Twelfth Night* which made matters easy for the boys playing the roles of women.

A word about the place of music in Elizabethan plays in general and Shakespeare's plays in particular. Whenever it is used, the music is an integral part of the play, as when the musicians attend upon Duke Orsino in *Twelfth Night* or when Hermion awakens at the sound of Paulina's music in *The Winter's Tale*.

Looking back on the Elizabethan Theatre from a distance of over three centuries in time and of about 10,000 kms. in space, one feels a sense of wonder that it was quite well-developed in many respects. One gets an impression that there was a close rapport between the actors and the spectators. In fact, there was no glaring separation between the two. Another is — much is left to the imagination of the spectator, because the scenic effect and stage properties were not so elaborate and obtrusive as they came to be later. Whether it is an advantage or disadvantage, the issue may be left to individual spectators, scholars and students and their responses.

The Grindstones

The grinder is dropping things
 Into the grindstones
 At whatever he lays his hands upon
 A thousand things lie tumbled down
 Aheaped incongruously.
 Amidst the heap are lying
 The songs of joy, the blooms of love,
 The palms of triumph, the buds of hope,
 The wings of truth, the lips of faith,
 The pearls of weal, the eyes of woe,
 The leaves of help, the limbs of care,
 The cheeks of charm, the brows of grace,
 The shields of honour newly won,
 And valour's trophies writ in blood,
 The wounded face of honesty,
 The unheard sighs of innocence,
 And even the idols of goods.
 Some are moist-eyed, some bravely gaze,
 But all alike wait for their turn
 To be ground to smithereens.

— IFTIKHAR HUSAIN RIZVI

ANANDA COOMARASWAMY

A Confluence of East and West

A. RANGANATHAN

Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, best remembered as the author of *The Dance of Shiva*, was one of the most versatile minds of his century. Indeed Coomaraswamy was one of the last poly-histors of our time, and his work straddling aesthetics and literature, reflects the deepest intuitions of the perennial tradition derived from Indian and European sources. For the spectrum of his thought can be viewed at different wavelengths. And Coomaraswamy, who had an unusual background, was a man of varied talents and interests—a scientist, an Indian nationalist in his youth and an universal being in his maturity, an interpreter of Indian art in its wider perspectives, a literary figure and an exponent of the perennial philosophy.

Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy was born on August 22, 1877, in Colombo, Ceylon. His father, Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy, noted for his forensic brilliance and classical scholarship, was the first Asian to be knighted during the reign of Queen Victoria. Sir Mutu enjoyed the esteem of such men as Lord Palmerston, Tennyson and Lord Beaconsfield; indeed, Lord Beaconsfield had portrayed him as Kusinara in his last unfinished novel.* In 1876, Sir Mutu married an English lady of Kent named Elizabeth Clay Beeby, and when their only child Ananda was born, he received the middle name "Kentish".

Ananda, after a brilliant career at Wycliffe and London University, was appointed director of the mineralogical survey of Ceylon at the age of twenty-six. Though he received a D. Sc. from London University for his research, his valuable discovery of thorianite in 1904 is not generally known. It was characteristic of Coomaraswamy's self-effacement that he called the new

*This unfinished novel is printed as an appendix in G. E. Buckle's *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli*.

mineral "thorianite", instead of linking it with his own name. In the course of his scientific work, he became interested in the artistic heritage of Ceylon and did a study of the surviving guilds of the mediaeval Sinhalese craftsmen and their artifacts. The results of the study are recorded in his classic monograph *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art* (1908). Soon he abandoned geology altogether and devoted himself wholly to the study of the arts and cultures of India and Ceylon. It was at this time that he published another excellent monograph *The Aims of Indian Art* (1908). In this study and in others, Coomaraswamy tried to reconstruct and interpret the philosophy of national art rather than to convey merely the beauties of different art-works. He was not a romantic aesthetician but the foremost academic historian of Indian and Indonesian art. And he succeeded not only in synthesizing the ideals and traditions of Indian art scattered through the ages in different parts of Asia, but also in creating a new consciousness of Indian cultural unity.

"The Asiatic Cult", writes Prof. Hans Kohn in his *A History of Nationalism in the East*, "has assumed new forms corresponding to Europe's expressionist tendencies, her reaching out towards the mythical and primitive; the roots of nationalism struck deeper, men meditated upon its spiritual value, as is seen in the writings of Coomaraswamy and his contemporaries. And all this reached its climax in Gandhi's agitation." Professor Kohn's attempt to demonstrate the similarity between European expressionism (which started as a movement in German literature and painting in the first quarter of the present century) and the Asiatic cult (which is a political phenomenon) will probably astonish readers. Yet his attempt is justified, for the revolt of the Indians against the alienation caused by the Western impact on India is comparable to the revolt of the adherents of expressionism against current art and civilization.

In a slightly different context, it was noted by Dr. Basil Gray of the British Museum that Coomaraswamy had died just when his life-work was coming to fruition. By the time of his death in 1947, the last vestiges of the "smoke clouds which all too long obscured the splendid achievements of Indian sculpture" (Rothenstein) were about to disappear. Indeed, it has been fashionable to regard Coomaraswamy as the prophet of Indian cultural nationalism. To any student of Coomaraswamy's thought, however, it is clear that, despite the national perspective of his earlier days, Coomaraswamy slowly came to perceive all that was best in other cultures and traditions, as is evident from the universal quality of his mature writings.

Undoubtedly, the aesthetic philosophy of Indian nationalism found its most articulate exponent in Coomaraswamy during the first decade of the twentieth century. In *Essays in National Idealism* he wrote: "We want our India for ourselves because we believe each nation has its own part to play in the long tale of human progress and nations which are not free to develop their individuality and character are also unable to make the contribution to the sum of human culture which the world has a right to expect of them." In other words, he argued that every nation ought to make its own contribution to what Mazzini acclaimed as "the concert of mankind, the orchestra of human genius." To him the word "nationalism" denoted the cultural expression of a nation. When India had attained independence, his message was "Be Yourself". It placed the accent on aesthetic authenticity and not on the political context of freedom. "Nations" observed Coomaraswamy, "are created by poets and artists, not by merchants and politicians. In art lie the deepest life principles".

In his famous oration delivered before the Phi Beta Kappa Society in 1837, Emerson had castigated American writers for their subservience to the artists of Europe and called on them to create an indigenous literature. His oration has been justly hailed as "America's declaration of intellectual independence". Similarly, to Coomaraswamy, Indian nationalism was a quest for self-realization, a declaration of spiritual independence. We cannot perceive the full significance of Coomaraswamy's philosophy of Indian nationalism without perceiving the aesthetic impact of the theory of "dhvani" on his philosophy of Indian art. The word "dhvani" literally means "suggestion in an aesthetic sense" and was developed into an elaborate theory by Anandavardhana, the celebrated critic of the ninth century A. D. While the "Dhvanyaloka" of Anandavardhana, the locus classicus in Indian literary criticism, deals with the aesthetic significance of words and their subtle undertones, Coomaraswamy reflected on the significance of art motifs and their symbolic meanings. Thus Coomaraswamy's approach to nationalism combined the patriotic spirit of Mazzini, the intellectual freedom of Emerson, and the aesthetic insight of Anandavardhana.

Coomaraswamy's was an aesthetic view of life. In fact he gave an aesthetic orientation to the concept of Indian freedom. "Have you ever realized", he asked of the Indian nationalist, "that India, politically and economically free, but subdued by Europe in the innermost soul is scarcely an ideal to be dreamt of or to live and die for." Indeed he was first and foremost

an artist. Dorothy Norman recorded Coomaraswamy's observation on Gandhi just before his death: "Gandhi can be looked upon as a moral saint. But not as an aesthetic saint. He said for example that a woman should not wear a necklace. Had he been an aesthetic saint, he would have said that if a necklace is worn, then it should be a good necklace." Here it would be relevant to quote a similar observation from his *Art and Swadeshi*: "Has it ever occurred to you that it is as much your duty to make your lives and your environment beautiful as to make them normal — in fact that without beauty there can be no true morality, just as without morality there can be no true beauty?" Again with his characteristic sarcasm Coomaraswamy speaks of the superficially Westernized Indian of his time who "disfigures the walls of his home with cheap oleographs, pretends to enjoy shrill records of European music, and then tries to save his soul by purchasing a share or two in a Swadeshi soap company." And in a nostalgic vein he cried: "Where are the filmy muslins or the flower-woven silks with which we used to worship the beauty of Indian women, the brazen vessels from which we ate and drunk, the concepts on which we trod with bare feet, or the pictures that revealed to us the love of Radha and the soul of the eternal snows?" It is this nostalgia which led to Coomaraswamy's recovery of the passport of the Indian nation in the cultural sense of the term.

Though Coomaraswamy wrote much, he always wrote well. A master of the aphoristic style, in his discourse he blended thought and feeling, poetical fervour and lucid exposition. To cite a few examples one could begin with his description of Borobudur: "The rich and gracious forms of these reliefs, which if placed end to end would extend for over five kilometers, bespeak an infinitely luxurious rather than a profoundly spiritual or energised experience. There is here no nervous tension, no concentration of force to be compared with that which so impresses the observer at Angkor Wat. Borobudur is like a ripe fruit matured in breathless air; the fullness of its forms is an expression of static wealth, rather than the volume that denotes the outward radiation of power. The Sumatran empire was now in the very height of its glory, and in intimate contact with the whole of the then civilized world; in the last analysis Borobudur is a monument of Sailendra culture, rather than that of Buddhist devotion."...The evocative description of Borobudur reminds one of his portrayal of Krishna. In the Museum of Fine Arts Collection wrote Coomaraswamy, "there is no more lovely painting of the Kangra School than the well known

“Cowdust”, where Krishna is seen returning with the herds and herdsmen to Brindavan at sunset...He is an Orphic power whose music charms and beguiles all nature, animate and inanimate alike, and the very rivers stay the courses to hear it...In innumerable paintings we find varied combinations of the theme.”

To cite another example, he writes about the Dance of Shiva : “If we could reconcile Time with Eternity, we can scarcely do so otherwise than by the conception of alternations of phase extending over vast regions of space and great and great tracts of time. Especially significant, then, is the phase alternation implied by the drum, and the fire which ‘changes’ not destroys. These are but visual symbols of the theory of the day and night of Brahma. In the night of Brahma, Nature is inert, and cannot dance till Shiva wills it. He rises from His rapture, and dancing sends through inert matter pulsing waves of awakening sound, and lo ! matter also dances appearing as a glory round about Him. Dancing He sustains its manifold phenomena. In the fullness of time, still dancing, he destroys all forms and names by fire and gives now rest. This is poetry ; but none the less science.”

This description of the dancing Shiva suggests T. S. Eliot’s memorable lines :

.....Neither flesh nor fleshless ;

Neither from nor towards ; at the still point, there the dance is.

And it also suggests the vision of Yeats in which all opposites are transcended and united in the cosmic dance :

O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,
How can we know the dancer from the dance ?

Equally sensitive is his assessment of Tagore’s paintings. “The poet gives no descriptive titles to his picture — how could he ? They are not pictures about things, but pictures about himself. In this sense they are probably much nearer to his music than to his poetry. In the poetry, so far at least as the context is concerned, he is primarily the sensitive exponent of a racial or rational tradition, not an inventor, and therefore his words are more profoundly sanctioned and more significant than those of any private genius could be, all India speaks and understands the same language. The poetry reveals nothing of the poet’s personality, though it establishes his status. But the painting is an intimacy comparable to the publication of private correspondence. What a varied and colourful person is revealed ! One picture, that might be taken for a representation of a cross between Shylock

and Ivan, the terrible, has qualities strangely suggestive of a stained glass window; others in the poet's own words depict the temperate exaggeration of a probable animal that had unaccountably missed its chance of existence', or some 'bird that can only soar in our dreams and find its nest in some hospitable lines that may offer it in our canvas'; in others, human seriousness is made ridiculous by animal caricature; others express the thrill of swift unhindered movement; one, representing a crowd attentive to a flute player may embody some allusion both to Krishna, and to the call of the infinite in the poet's own songs, another is a dancing Ganesha, far removed from the canons of Hindu iconography; there are portraits, including one of a young Bengali girl, the direct antithesis of 'Ivan, the Terrible'; groupings of coloured flowers; pages of actual manuscript; and soft ethereal landscapes. The manner is as varied as the theme, and this despite the fact that all pictures are done with a pen, usually the back of a fountain pen, and coloured inks or tints; any method is employed that may be available or that may suggest itself at the moment. The artist, like a child, invests his own technique as he goes along; adequate to the end in view; this end is not 'Art' with a capital A, on the one hand — nor on the other, a merely pathological self-expression; nor art intended to improve our minds, nor to provide for the artist himself an 'escape'; but without ulterior motives, truly innocent, like the creation of an universe.²

Between 1895, when as a young man of eighteen, he published his first article "The Geology of Doverow Hill", and 1947, his seventieth year, he became the author of more than five hundred publications. Their scope is astonishing. He had written several articles on Indian, Indonesian and Sinhalese Art in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and also in *The National Encyclopaedia of America*, in addition to editing English words of Indian origin in *Webster's New International Dictionary*. The rest of his publications ranges from his collection of essays entitled *The Dance of Shiva* to such works as *The History of Indian and Indonesian Art, Hinduism and Buddhism, Rajput Painting* and *A New Approach to the Vedas*. *The History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, which was published in 1927, is his chief contribution to the study of Indian art in its historical, sociological and philosophical contexts. Beginning with the Indo-Sumerian finds, it gives a clear and connected historical account of the entire history of Indian and Indonesian art, with special emphasis on problems relating to the Indian origin of the Buddha image. His profound grasp of various inter-related disciplines helped him to realize

the twin ideals of harmony and truth in all Indian art. Thus, in discussing the evolution of Indian art and cultures as a joint creation of the Aryan and Dravidian genius, he is able to reveal that the Gupta Buddhas, Elephanta Mahesvara, Pallava Lingams, and the later Natarajas are products of the crossing of two spiritual natures. In the words of Coomaraswamy, this situation resulted in a cultural process, which "in a very real sense" was "a marriage of East and West", or of the North and South, consummated, as the donors of the image would say, "for the good of all sentient beings; a result, not of a superficial blending of Hellenistic and Indian technique, but of the crossing of spiritual tendencies, racial 'Samskaras' (preoccupations) that may well have been determined before the use of metals was known."

Looking back, we cannot doubt that Coomaraswamy's migration to Boston was a gain; it led to a deeper appreciation of Indian art in the West and particularly in America. Also, his stay at Needham widened his intellectual horizons and deepened his ideas on mysticism. During this period of time he concerned himself especially with the general problems of art, religion and philosophy. By harmonizing his manifold interests, both Eastern and Western, he attained a unity of outlook which invests his writings with a lasting significance. Coomaraswamy has argued in his *Hindu View of Art* that the fusion of religious ecstasy and artistic experience is not an exclusively Hindu view; it has been expounded by many others — such as the neo-platonists, Hsieh Ho, Goethe, Blake, Schopenhauer or Schiller — and also restated by Croce. In one of his flashes of self-revelation, Coomaraswamy called himself "an orientalist who was in fact almost as much a platonist as a mediaevalist." And he was continually striving to understand the creative unity of symbolical expressions — the 'Brahma' of Indian philosophers, the 'Logos' of the Platonic philosophers, on the 'Unio Mystica' of Jan Van Ruysbroeck, the father of mysticism in the Netherlands, and the 'Urquelle' of the German Meister Eckhart — and, in this way, to synthesize the fundamental insights of the Eastern and Western traditions of mysticism.

His culturally most significant notion is that of the chosen people of the future — a notion which elevates Coomaraswamy to the select company of those choice spirits who have effectively contributed to the continuous dialogue between East and West. According to him, "the chosen people of the future cannot be any nation or race but an aristocracy of the earth uniting the virility of European youth to the serenity of Asiatic age." Elsewhere he wrote: "Who that has breathed the clear mountain

air of the Upanishads, of Gautama, Sankara and Kabir, of Rumi, Lao-tse and Jesus can be alien to those who have sat at the feet of Plato and Kant, Tauler, Behmen and Ruysbroock. Whitman, Nietzsche and Blake"? Coomaraswamy hoped for a more fruitful era in "East-West Cultural Relations" and wrote that "men like the English De Morgan and George Boole, the American Emerson and the contemporary Frenchmen Rene Guenon and Jaques De Marquette, were able to make a real and vital contact with Indian metaphysics which became for them a transforming experience." He also stressed the desirability of "using one tradition to illuminate the other so as to demonstrate even more clearly that the variety of the traditional cultures, in all of which there subsisted until now a polar balance of spiritual and material values, is simply that of the dialects of what is always one and the same language of the spirit, of that perennial philosophy to which no one people or age can lay an exclusive claim."

In his admirably clear study of Coomaraswamy's theory of poetic creation entitled *The Traditional Theory of Literature*, Prof. Ray Livingston has stressed the importance of a great critic like Coomaraswamy who makes our mind receptive to the depths of meaning and profound life-giving qualities of perennial works such as the Vedas, Brahmanas, Upanishads as well as the writings of Plato, Plotinus, St. Augustine, Rumi, Dante, Eckhart and Blake. Prof. Livingston has also observed that in the process of winning back his birth as an oriental, Coomaraswamy responded as few men ever have to the Faustian challenge :

"What from your fathers' heritage is lent,
Earn it anew to really possess it."

However, Coomaraswamy's response to the Faustian challenge was fundamentally aesthetic. Indeed Coomaraswamy could focus his image, whether of the Divine Comedy, or a bronze figure of a dancing Shiva in a lightning-flash of gnosis, revealing a new wavelength of aesthetic perception. For his horizon encompassed not merely the sublime figure of the Nataraja but also the majesty of the great Gothic cathedrals, the great poetry of Dante, the manifold meanings of the Vedic incantations, *Paradise Lost* and the transcendent thought of Eckhart which reflected the "spiritual being of Europe at its highest tension."

It is remarkable that Coomaraswamy who began his career as a geologist, should have ended it with publication of *Time and Eternity*, a perceptive essay in metaphysical speculation.

He achieved distinction in four different fields of intellectual and creative endeavour: geology, political philosophy, Indian art history, and the general philosophy of art, literature and religion. In his own person, he symbolized a racial confluence of East and West, as well as an aesthetic symbiosis of the two cultures, scientific and literary. Child of Ceylon and England, he became an Indian in the same deep sense in which Henry James transformed himself into an European and T. S. Eliot into an Englishman. While reflecting on the life of Coomaraswamy, one is irresistibly reminded of Walt Whitman's "marriage of continents, climates and oceans". Coomaraswamy's early scientific career can be compared to a spring originating from some subterranean mineral source, delighting everyone by its natural freshness and sweetness. And the later development of his mind can be likened to the course of the stream of Indian artistic consciousness, which starting from the Vedic source and flowing through India catches the nationalistic current at the turn of the century, then mingles with the streams of traditional European art and finally joins the ocean that washes the shores of Philosophia Perennis.

THE MIRROR OF LIFE

When young — strong, hot and bold,
 When old — weak, bent and cold;
 Then — smart, fair, lovely, gold,
 Now — dark, wrinkled and fold;
 Once — rich, blind and unkind,
 But now — poor, wise and kind;
 Your looks then were skyward,
 But now — down and earthward;
 Look into the mirror of life,
 And pave your path of life;
 If heaven you choose in youth,
 When old, a hell in truth.

C. JACOB

VISWANATHA

The Living Legend in Indian Literature

SESHENDRA SHARMA

Andre Gide, writing about Dostoevsky, observes, "Like the bees the Montaigne tells of, I have but gathered from his works what I needed to make my own honey." I should say the same of myself and a large number of writers of my generation as well, in relation to Sri Viswanatha Satyanarayana. The influence that his personality wields, is so profound and so pervasive that many hardly realise it, like one does not realise the gravitational pull of the earth.

His creative force which unleashed profuse literary activity, spreading over four decades carried, on to this day relentlessly, has dwarfed his fellow-writers beyond recognition. Very often he reminds me of Dante's lines from *The Divine Comedy*, "On all sides the sun was shooting forth the day and with his keen arrows has chased Capricorn from the mid-heaven."

In him we meet a dazzling personality of spiritual greatness and intellectual magnificence, who has seen and expressed the beauties and tensions of the world, its conflicts and reconciliations, who would look unflinchingly on the immense erosion of time and yet has taught us how to transform the continuously perishing moment of today into an enduring timeless moment, a moment that could belong to the eternal.

Viswanatha is the living link between the past and the future, though he has been often misrepresented by some as "anti-progressive." He could only be called "anti-progressive" if Tilak, Gandhi and Gokhale could also be termed as anti-progressive. A mind that moves on such intellectual plane as his, cannot wholly be appreciated by sub-average standards of criticism. It is perhaps T. S. Eliot who said that the content of a classical genius has to be assessed always in relation to the past and the future, because he breaks the barriers of

time and transcends the narrow boundaries of language. Viswanatha's works are on an epic scale; his style and finesse unfold great vistas of epic grace and grandeur; they play on the entire emotional range of the human psyche.

He opened to his people a vast inward realm of self-discovery and self-identification. A new movement was initiated enlightening our tradition and culture in all its Indianness, which was regenerative in its basic faith, classical in weight and prestige, and at the same time universal in its communicability. All works of lasting value have, as a rule, in their core, the scent and honey of their native soil. It is said Dostoevsky had a grievance against Turgenev that he could not trace in the latter "this national feeling, his opinion being that Turgenev was too westernised."

There is no branch of literature which Viswanatha's creative pen did not touch and turn into gold — poetry, song story, novel, play and criticism. But his "Veyipadagalu" stands out like the Himalaya among the mountains, as a creft of creative genius and as the product of a master-mind, steeped in the culture and learning of his soil. May be the story is loose and flabby as some critics complain; but it acquires tremendous power in the hands of this expert story-teller. Here this author is comparable to the great masters of the West like Dostoevsky and Tolstoy.

Russians are the makers of novel in the modern literature, and curiously enough the Russian novel from Tolstoy to Boris Pasternak consistently preserved its characteristics, of which a wide canvas of background, perhaps of giant-size, is the most remarkable one. Russian novel as a matter of fact thrives on its enormity. However, scanning with a more careful eye, one will be certainly impressed with the imposing power of the background in which the relevance of plot becomes inseparable from the background itself.

The genius of each country or language thrives best in only one of the various branches of literature like novel in Russia, play in England poetry in France, though France seems to diffuse all branches of her literature with intellectualism. However, the best of the French poetry is only behind the poetry of many Eastern countries, Middle East or Far East or India. Perhaps poetry is an Eastern characteristic just as criticism is a western characteristic. We find the clue in the Upanishats which are apparently the product of critical accumen of the human intellect but containing beautiful passages of great poetic value.

Among the Indian writers Sharat Chandra Chatterji, whom I consider a star in the galaxy of world literature, loses a point

in being less literary in style than Viswanatha. A masterly work in any medium of literature cannot be said to have reached the watermark of perfection if it has no literary style about it, though this may not entirely hold good for a play. Style is the personality and bearing of the work. However, I am one with Somerset Maugham when he says "...there is no particular reason why the dramatist should have a literary training.... and an acquaintance with literature is perhaps chiefly useful in helping him avoid the literary." But in the case of the story and the novel, which are purely prose narrations, literary attire is necessary to cover their nakedness.

When the sky of Andhra Pradesh was clouded by the internal conflict of regionalism, the news of Viswanatha receiving the Jnan Pith Award came as a silver lining, also a new dawn to the literary horizon of Telugu. For long we have eagerly looked forward to this award to be bestowed on this illustrious writer of Andhra Pradesh, who was for many years repeatedly proposed for this distinction and repeatedly ignored by the so-called judges of literature. This honour which was due to him, came like a rambling rose after wandering around for quite sometime. Whether it is now of any interest to the recipient or not, the event is, however, important in the history of the Telugu-speaking people of India and their literature, because it places them on the map of India for the first time in the real sense of the term. Perhaps after Tikkana of the thirteenth century and Srinatha of the fifteenth century, Viswanatha is the only creative genius in Telugu literature, of that outstanding stature, in a certain way even surpassing them. Such historic personages do not appear in every century and it is but natural that he has been the cause of placing Telugu in the map of Indian languages and made history thereby.

However, I was in fact surprised to know that the award was given to this author. Considering the conditions in the field today one would expect that a professor or a quasi-political litterateur would get it. One should know that the Central Akademi Award went to some obscure persons successively for five years or so after the constitution of that body. Most shocking as it is, it is a matter for investigation into the conduct of these bodies. At a time when only those who are holding offices in the universities, colleges and Akademies are deciding the fate of literature, having made literature their exclusive monopoly, just only by virtue of their positions, this award for the first time shows them their places and declares to the world that literature is not the monopoly of any official hierarchy, but belongs to that grand army of awakened souls whose life and work

join the eternal stream of universal culture and civilisation. Literature and art which always claimed the highest level of human conduct has today been pulled down to the most degraded levels where unscrupulous careerists, defunct politicians and mere degree-holders of doubtful merit, cluster around these institutions for offices of profit, or of advantage, for awards and honours; and in the process reduced literature to a farce or a mere race for benefits of one kind or other regardless of merit. This award finally establishes the utter futility of awards and titles and the wretched shallowness of these men in positions.

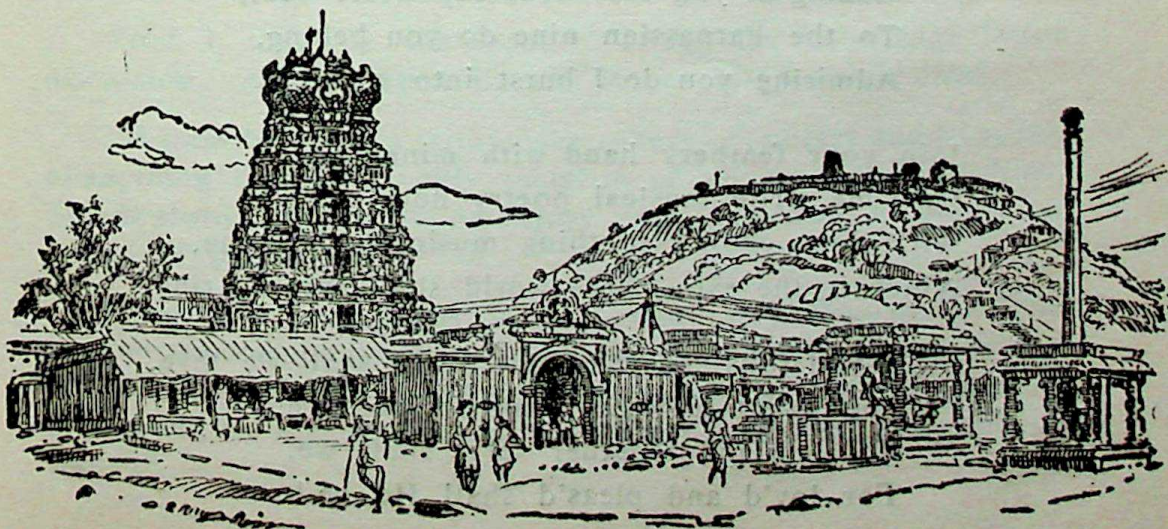
It is not the commonplace facts of Viswanatha's life which make him great, for there are only few such. Most of Viswanatha's living hours are spent in the pursuit of writing and as such he is a very rare person amongst the race of writers, who thinks, lives and breathes writing. He dictates 3 novels a day. He is a living legend. It is essential that a writer who seeks excellence should be free from all other-wordly involvements. It is exactly this that we draw from the lives of great writers of the world (by great writers I mean those in whom greatness surpasses the petty levels of mere literary excellence). The poetic genius of Valmiki would have been only a clock without the main spring if it had a vacuum of higher values that elevated mankind from the level of the beast. It will be interesting to know that Valmiki and Vyasa of Ramayana and Mahabharata went into an intense state of meditation to write those works which made epochs in the history of our culture and literature. It is such intense and single-minded commitment to inner self that yields moments of truth and beauty.

In a life such as this, enemies are not pursued, benefits are not chased and ambitions are not nurtured. Dwarfs are not given the place of giants and that is why, in spite of many enemies and despite withholding many benefits, this great man steadily rose like a pillar of strength by the dint of sheer work and today one can look at him and say, here is a man whose work outshines all the awards and honours given to him. Quite contrary to this we have amidst us many whose titles and awards outshine their work. And it is deplorable that honesty in the so-called intellectual sections of our country is today at such a low ebb that it never occurs to them to feel ashamed of accepting these awards and titles without deserving them. It is well known that Jean Paul Sartre rejected the Nobel Prize when it was given to him; one of his reasons chiefly was, in his own words;

“For example, it has not been awarded to Neruda, one of the greatest South American poets. Lewis Aragon has never been seriously considered but he deserves it. Unfortunately it was awarded to Pasternak before Sholokhov.”

I do not know what the Jnan Pith said in their citation about Viswanatha. But if it were I that drafted it, the tribute to sum up his contribution would be — “He did to India with *Veyipadagalu*, what Valmiki did with his *Ramayana*. He gave us the 20th century version of our culture. Sri Viswanatha has fulfilled in his generation, the mission which Shankara, Vidyaranya and Vivekananda in their generations. He has kept the fires burning, the great fires of Vedic Agni.” He is a great man and a fulfilled man at that. To be great is one thing and to be fulfilled is another. Life smiles only on a few great persons. And only they get the chance to express themselves fully, contribute to the story of mankind and help determine the shape of its destiny. I cannot help recalling in this context the powerful words of Henry Miller about Pablo Picasso in his preface to Brassai’s biography of that great painter. How aptly they apply to our own giant. “He is outsized, a human phenomenon.” He has made his world, we haven’t even begun to make ours...one might say that the gods were good to him. But that is not half of it. He was good to himself. He appreciates himself. He knows who he is and what he is.”

(Written on the eve of conferring Jnan Pith Award to
Sri Viswanatha in the year 1976)



SWEET MELODIES

P. V. SHRIKANTH

Oh! Sister Muse of Poetry, Hail!
Beauteous, making many a heart sail;
Beyond compare, lovely are you,
Glittering and fresh as the dew.

Flowing and silky is your hair,
To shed light in dark are you so fair,
Slender and smooth are your arms,
Your gorgeous face has plentiful charms.

Silky, shining robes do you wear,
Your beauty with grace to find is rare.
So soft is your walk, hard to hear,
To me and other poets are you dear.

Your lips are so demure and sweet,
Gazing at you fast does my heart beat,
To the Parnassian nine do you belong,
Admiring you do I burst into song.

Join your feathery hand with mine,
Help me write musical poetry fine,
With your cooing soothing music shall I sing,
Which in the ears of the world shall forever ring.

Wonderous music to the world shall we give,
Our sweet melodies shall forever live,
Join me and together serve shall we,
For lov'd and pleas'd shall He be!

THE CRITICISM OF NISSIM EZEKIEL

An Appraisal

BIJAY KUMAR DAS

Indian English criticism is of recent origin. Sri Aurobindo is the first Indian English critic who has given a shape to Indian English poetry criticism. Nissim Ezekiel's name is almost synonymous with post-Independence Indian English poetry. It is he who has given a new direction and a name, as it were, to Indian English poetry. But when his poetry brought him laurels his criticism suffered neglect. Few people know that he is a critic with original insight and deep understanding. His criticism when read in its perspective reveals the greatness of his mind, and the breadth of his understanding. Though he has written a small number of critical essays, they point to a new direction of Indian English poetry criticism. It is difficult to separate the poet in him from the critic in him and again the critic in him from the scholar in him. In him not only scholarship merges into criticism but all three—poetry, scholarship and criticism—act and inter-act upon one another. Keeping these premises in mind let us turn to his criticism.

First I take up the essay, "Poetry as knowledge"¹ for discussion. At the outset Ezekiel makes his position clear.

"I want to remain within the sphere of poetry and to speak of anything outside it only in terms of apparent relationships. This is always felt to be necessary and important by poets and critics of poetry".²

According to Ezekiel a poet does not theorize. "The creator of poetry, even if he is not a very good one but provided he is authentically a creator and not merely a cultural initiator, is bound to see poetry as knowledge in his own special way".³

The experience is vital to the poet. The poetic process can be spoken of through the language of experience. He also admits that "the poet too uses that common language and these methods in certain cultural roles he may choose to play. But it seems to me that these roles are secondary".⁴

He does not agree with those who claim the highest status for poetry among the arts and sciences. He disagrees with C. D. Lewis views on Wordsworth's "The Solitary Reaper", when the latter says that "Wordsworth's task was to show the uniqueness immanent in a commonplace experience", to describe or project 'the state of mind she produces in him' and that the knowledge we get from the poem is knowledge of a certain mood".⁵ According to Ezekiel, knowledge of a mood is knowledge at all. He maintains that "There is a sudden heightening of awareness without which the Highlandlass is not the Highlandlass of the poem but any lass in any landscape".⁶ The metaphors and images form "a cerebral aura around the immediacy and totality of the experience." According to Ezekiel, "We know of this experience when we read the poem, to the extent that we respond to poetry. But we still do not know the experience till such time as we appear to have passed through a process resembling that which is implied in Wordsworth's poem. When we do, it seems that our experience of Wordsworth's poem is complete. In reality, degrees of intensity, dimensions of feeling, potency of thought, quality of inner change, all are revealed as vistas only, with further potentialities clearly hinted at, so that between the beginning and the unseen, perhaps unseeable end is our life itself in the knowledge of poetry".⁷ Ezekiel believes that one has to live with poetry and not merely to read it occasionally.

Versified knowledge is "superfluous as knowledge and superficial as verse". "Poetry as propaganda is equally suspect", says Ezekiel. According to him, "The surrealist movement in poetry, claiming to arrive at the truth by using automatic modes of writing derived from the alleged workings of the unconscious failed miserably to produce much poetry with staying power. Marxist poetry is more Marxist than poetry. Drug-induced states of mind in which the consciousness is temporarily expanded and intensified have so far not produced any notable poetry. Poets who have mystical experiences and project them in verse have occasionally been successful but mystics who write poetry do it badly. Religious hymns, however notable the religious sentiment they express, are not notably poetic. Great religious poetry undoubtedly exists but the greatness is unequally divided between the poetry and the religion, while perfect integration

between the two is rare. To be good, poetry has to be an independent art".⁸ Poetry to Ezekiel is an art which is independent of all other branches of learning. He believes in working on a poem — revising and re-revising till it achieves a kind of perfection. He is not pleading "poetry for poetry sake" — far from it. He implores upon us to see poetry as knowledge.

Ezekiel disagrees with I. A. Richards when the latter describes the statements of poetry as pseudo-statements. He argues that the distinction between two types of statements in terms of true and pseudo is deplorable because poetry is true or nothing, though its mode of approaching, grasping and expressing the truth may be different from that of science. Poetic truth is not pseudo-truth if such a term is permissible. It has to be examined in its context and may be located anywhere between the strictly personal and the universal. In fact, even when it is strictly personal in the sense of not corresponding to the known external facts, it is still true or false to the poet's feelings, and the truth or falsehood is revealed in the quality of the statement, in the coherence, consistency, tune and resonance of the poem as a whole. However personal the poetry may be, it has to obey the laws of truth, even the truth of an experienced contradiction poetically expressed, which gives it a universal significance ... But the statements poetry sets out to make are true statements in their own context and according to the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty".⁹

It is not correct to say that poets do not think. Ezekiel differs from T. S. Eliot on this point. Ezekiel maintains that "What is more plausible is that the thinking is done in poetry as in philosophy or literary criticism and then projected in a form which conceals its conceptual character".¹⁰ Ezekiel rightly observes that "poetry that is broken up into thinking on the one hand and all the other elements on the other, which are then further broken up into individual units or qualities, is no longer poetry".¹¹ Unlike Eliot, Ezekiel believes that "Shakespeare does all the real thinking which the poetic imagination requires. Without real thinking his poetic imagination would be powerless".¹²

Commenting on the relation of poetry to knowledge, Ezekiel says: "I think that if the relation of poetry to knowledge is not more often discussed by poets and critics, it is because they are afraid of its narrow, utilitarian connotation the false expectation it may create of a highly organized body of concepts visibly within the body of poetry. The body of poetry is emotion

and the knowledge assimilated in it is emotionally assimilated. Otherwise it is not poetry though it is often the prose element of it in the guise of poetry".¹³

Ezekiel considers metre, metaphor, image, symbol, structure, texture and tension as means of poetry but not its ends. The ends of poetry are meaning, knowledge and truth. Knowledge is the centre of the trinity. This essay is highly intellectual and thought-provoking. But it confuses rather than clarifies the proposition taken by Ezekiel: "Poetry as knowledge" because he has not explained what he meant by knowledge. Is it the knowledge of the poet that the poem expresses? Or is it the knowledge derived out of experience that the poem expresses? Should we take knowledge in the sense of power? Ezekiel cleverly avoids this problem by stating in the beginning of the essay that "we know what poetry is and that we know what knowledge is." Nevertheless it is a very illuminating essay on poetry seen as knowledge in a specified context.

Ezekiel has made an attempt to define "Indianness" in Indian English poetry in his essay "What is Indo-English Poetry".¹⁴ He rightly observes that "There is no single Indian flavour which alone can claim the designation and that its value, too, depends on a host of generative factors which should never be simplified for purposes of praise or blame".¹⁵

Ezekiel considers some titles of Ramanujan's poems as having Indian orientation. According to him "A mere glance at what is Indian in Ramanujan's *Selected Poems*, is enough to indicate a complex interaction of psychological forces kept under linguistic and formal control. This complex interaction can hardly be called Indian without adding the word modern to it".¹⁶ Ramanujan's poetry raises in the Indian reader's mind sophisticated questions about ancient and modern Indian culture.

According to Ezekiel, "Kolatkar's way of being Indian is natural and effortless, seeing the present in the context of the past. Belief and habits of the Indian tradition crumble under his sharp glance without recourse to any special poetic devices of the kind of which Ramanujan is a master".¹⁷

Indian reality and the presence of Indian scene are easy enough to recognize in Indian English poetry. Similarly complex organised response to contemporary Indian situation can easily be found in modern Indian English poetry. One such example, according to Ezekiel, is Adil Jussawalla's *Missing Person*.

Though Ezekiel gives a few examples of Indianness in Indian English poetry, it leaves much to be desired. He is not very clear

about the term "Indianness" in this essay and his reference to only a small number of poets regarding "Indianness" in their poetry is not very satisfactory. He too quotes liberally and profusely from the text to drive home his point.

"To Revise or Not to Revise"¹⁸ is an essay on the poetic process, that is, — how poetry came to be written. Ezekiel believes that as a rule poetry should be revised before it is published. Since poetry is a craft, it needs revision. Inspirational poetry does not need revision but there is a great danger to it — that is, when inspiration stops, poetry stops. There are two extreme viewpoints — one, inspirational poetry does not require revision, secondly, there is Valery's view that a poem is never completed — it is abandoned. Ezekiel believes that there are a number of positions accepted as viable between these two extremes. He says, "I assume that there is such a thing as temperament which inclines the poet towards one or other mode of creation, and sometimes a combination of modes. As he comes to terms with it and understands its ways, he revises or does not revise, expects inspiration or finds substitutes for it".¹⁹

Ezekiel suggests that a poet should have an open mind regarding inspiration and revision in order to make his poetry artistically viable. According to him, "Involvement in poetry, comprehensively, is of course the first condition, loving it, caring for its past, present and future, wanting very much to write it and to achieve some degree of excellence in the writing, thinking about its problems, assessing and judging it without inhibitions, trying to assimilate knowledge of it, and even becoming acquainted with its psychological signs and signals, this is the beginning, the most elementary basis of poetic practice".²⁰

Ezekiel has a word of caution for the poets who want to revise their poems. Thus he says : "In revising poems, poets should guard against the danger of adding complexity like a varnish or altering a structure for the sake of a more intricate rhythm, which may choke the meaning. A poem should never be revised to accommodate mannerisms but to eliminate such as have crept in. Clearly, then, revision is a double-edged weapon".²¹

In an article entitled "The Writer as Historical Witness : Culture, Colonialism and Indo-English Poetry",²² Ezekiel maintains that "the bulk of Indo-English poetry is necessarily remote from historical witnessing." He is of the opinion that, "when-ever there is vitality in poetry there will be variety as well,

and much of it will seem, superficially, to be only self-regarding until we see it in a full human perspective. In that perspective, the personal-private has a curious tendency to become everybody's experience". "A lot of poetry, then, I argue is public when it is most private", writes Ezekiel and goes on to say that "to assess Indo-English poetry in relation to two concepts: one is that of major and minor, the other that of Indianness" would be more constructive and profitable. I am inclined to agree with Ezekiel on this point not fully but fifty per cent. It is difficult to say who is a major poet and who is a minor poet. There is no clear-cut border line between major poetry and minor poetry. Even Eliot was called a "great minor poet" by David Daiches. But it is desirable to assess Indo-English poetry in terms of Indianness.

Ezekiel argues that Indian references and images by themselves do not make an Indo-English poem Indian. The determining factor is the sensibility at work in relation to all things Indian, which are not to be identified with what is claimed to be a wholly indigenous perception or way of thinking. "Indo-English poets are effective witnesses of cultural history when they use those modes (i. e., irony, parody, scepticism and allied modes of thinking) naturally and authoritatively." says Ezekiel. It is not difficult to agree with him on this point. The validity of Ezekiel's criticism lies in the fact that he is both a creator and a critic. His observation is based on first hand experience and that lends authenticity to his criticism.

NOTES

1. Nissim Ezekiel, 'Poetry as knowledge', ed. S. K. Desai and G. N. Devy, *Critical Thought*, (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd. 1987) Pp. 226-236
2. Ibid p. 227, 3. Ibid p. 227 4. Ibid p. 228 5. Ibid p. 228
6. Ibid p. 229 7. Ibid p. 229 8. Ibid p. 230 9. Ibid p. 231
10. Ibid p. 231 11. Ibid p. 232 12. Ibid p. 232 13. Ibid p. 233
14. Nissim Ezekiel, "What is Indian in Indo-English Poetry?" *Osmania Journal of English Studies* Volume XIX, 1983, p. 50.
15. Ibid p. 51 16. Ibid p. 54 17. Ibid 18. Nissim Ezekiel, "To Revise or Not to Revise", *The Literary Criterion* Volume XVIII No. 3, 1983. Pp. 1-9. 19. Ibid p. 3 20. Ibid p. 3-4
21. Ibid p. 7.

Administration of Justice in Tamil Literature

DR. R. SUBRAMANIAN

THE CONCEPT OF LAW

Law as understood today is quite different from the conception of law in ancient Tamil Nadu. Law to the ancient Indians, whether of the North or the South India, was the customary law, the law of diverse peoples. There was in fact no legislature which made and unmade laws. In very ancient times, the king represented the state as the administrator, as the leader of hosts in war and as the judge. But with the expansion of the State, rose up other institutions. A need was felt for the distribution of power among institutions which shouldered the responsibility on behalf of the state. One among such institutions was the department of justice. The king entrusted the work of administering justice to a body of officials who were held responsible for the proper conduct of justice. Invariably the members of this body were learned peoples, and the Hall of Justice was called Arak-kalam. This term is rendered Tarumasanam by the commentator.

THE COURT OF JUSTICE

It is evident that there was then a Court of Justice known *Manram*, *avai*, *Avaik-Kalam*, in chief cities where both civil and criminal cases were taken cognizance of, tried, and decided. The judges were largely guided by what is known as Dharmanul.

A HIGH SENSE OF JUSTICE

The pregnant observation of the Kural, namely, that it is not the lance that gains victory but only a righteous administration that contributes to success, is corroborated by the Puram where the observance of the Dharmaic rule is said to be essential to and incumbent on a king.

In more than one place in the *Silappadikaram* it is said that, if justice was not properly meted out, the king would not survive it. In fact this is mentioned as the chief characteristic of the Pandyan kings. With such a high sense of justice, then, the ancient Tamil kings left no stone unturned for meting out proper justice to the wronged and the innocent. There was a special department of justice composed of highly learned persons. The king was of course the High Court of Appeal.

THE WHEEL OF LAW

The control of passions, the impartial outlook, contempt for avarice and freedom from different kinds of fears are the main personal qualities required for those who are destined to administer justice. The negation of these qualities and Draconic laws impede the proper administration of justice. The following passage is from *Pathirruppathu*, one of the Sangam anthologies, and is addressed to a Chera king known as Kuttuvan of Many Elephants.

The wheel of law doth stop its motion
When anger, lust, undue favour,
Falsehood, cowardice and excess love,
For wealth and cruel punishments appear
Know this, my Lord of mighty lineage.

BODY AND SOUL

Of all the relationships known to human mind, the relationship between the body and soul is considered to be the most intimate and sacred. This intimacy is so intense, no one—not even the greatest of thinkers—used to think that these two are separate entities. Our poet compares the body and the soul. The body moves as the soul directs. This passage is from *Purananuru*, a Sangam anthology — 2000 years ago.

KING, THE BODY

Kamba Ramayanam is a Tamil epic of the 12th century A. D. It is held in high esteem by all the lovers of literature. In the following passage, a new turn is given to the political concepts of the relation between the ruler and the ruled. The fundamental principles of democracy find an important place in this passage; most probably for the first time in the oriental thought. This is an original turn given by Kamban, the poet, on retrospection, experience and projection. The ruler is personified as the body, which is being animated by the subjects, the life. So the rulers

and the ruled should realise their responsibilities and act in harmony like body and soul.

The king bedecked with dazzling jewels,
with strength of mighty fierceful lions.
Holding diamond sword in hand,
Guarded all the living as
He would guard the life his own.
As all the living life were his
He stood as body to the life
The world which moved his actions all.

BELL OF JUSTICE

The fact that the kings were available to the people for the administration of justice and the redress of their grievances is indicated by the story of Manunitikanda Cholan, who, on enquiry, is said to have ordered the running of the chariot over his son, who had killed a calf while driving his chariot when the calf's mother complained to the king by ringing the bell of justice at the palace gate. Even in later times it appears that such a bell (*araichimani*) was kept at the entrance to the place to be rung by the aggrieved and distressed people, to call the attention of the king. Immediately after hearing the bell the king would go to the court, summon the party and enquire about the complaint. The king is said to have heard complaints even when he was in camp. Probably if the case was of a complicated nature, he asked competent officers by his side to try it or directed the matter to be settled by arbitration by the learned men of the locality in the presence of a Government official. The king's court, besides being one of original jurisdiction, appears also to have had appellate jurisdiction.

THE CALL FOR JUSTICE

Silappathikaram helps us to know about the keen sense of justice of the people of the Sangam Age. Kaverippoompattinam was the capital of Cholas. There were several Manrams (places of public resort) there. Pavai Manram was one among them. It is interesting to know why it was called Pavai Manram. It was believed that the Pavai (image) in that Manram would shed tears of grief should there be any flaw in the administration of law or failure of justice in the court of the city.

The Tamils of those days had a firm faith that justice would never fail in Aramkuru Avaiaam. Alangudi Vanganar in one of his poems in Natrinal makes a pointed reference to Aramkuru Avaiaam of Uraiyoor.

“You (lover) with deep-rooted love will ever remain in my heart like justice in the Aramuru Avaiaam of Uraiyoor.”

So speaks the lady love to the lover in the poem.

Sangam literature also helps us to know the types of cases tried, the punishments awarded, and the mode of trial in Aramkuru Avaiaam and also of subordinate courts in the mofussil towns going by the name “Uoor Chapaikal.”

The Pandya Queen is explaining her dream and the omens to Pandian Neduzhelian. At that time Kannaki appeared in the entrance of the palace and told the palace guard :

“Hoy, doorkeeperi ! Hoy, watchman ! Hoy, palace guards of an irresponsible ruler whose vile heart lightly eases aside the kingly duty of rendering justice ! God ! Tell how a woman, carrying a single ankle bracelet from a pair that once joyfully rang together, waits at the gate. Go ! announce me !”

The guard bowed before the king and said : “Long live the ruler of Korkai ! Long live Tennavan, Lord of the Southern mountains, whose fair name calumny and scandal have never touched !”

The king said : “The guard let the woman enter and brought her to the king.” When she drew near the monarch, he said : “Woman, your face is soiled from weeping. Who are you, young woman ? What brings you before us ?”

She replied :

“Oh, you king of confused mind,
I with complaint here have come ;
I come from Puhar famed for justice
where the ruler gave himself
Just to save a hostage bird ;
Mind you, Oh king ! he gave his body
To save a bird that found refuge.
A weeping cow once rang the bell
To get an audience of the king ;
She lost her calf a tender one !
Who killed the calf ? None but king's son
who drove the car on lurking calf ;
Accident ! Accident ! No thought he had
to run the car to kill the calf ;
Many and many were the laws
The priests and elders gave the king
To excuse the son, the only heir.

Shook his head in disdain,
 Rose the king from exalter throne.
 Took his son and ran the car
 Over his, who should succeed
 The noble throne of Chola clan,
 Thus was justice met to all
 This is the place from which I hail
 That is justice we have known.

How proud Kannaki feels of her land and the justice of the rulers! And further she narrates: "There in Puhar a man Kovalan was burnt. He was the son of a wealthy merchant, Masathuvan. His family is known and his name untarnished. Led by fate, O king, he entered your city, with jingling anklets, expecting to earn a living. When he tried to sell my ankle bracelet, he was murdered. I am his wife. My name is Kannaki."

The king answered,

"Divine woman, there is no injustice in putting a robber to death. Do you not know that that is the duty of a king?"

Kannaki said, "King of Korkai, you went astray from the path of duty. Remember that my ankle bracelet was filled with precious stones."

"Woman" the king answered, "what you have said is pertinent. For ours was filled, not with gems, but with pearls. Let it be brought." The ankle with bracelet was brought and placed before the king. Kannaki seized it and broke it open. A gem sprang up into the king's face. When he saw the stone, he faltered. He felt his parasol fallen, his scepter bent. He said, "It is right for a king to act upon the word of a miserable goldsmith? I am the thief. For the first time I have failed in my duty as protector of the Southern kingdom. No way is left open to me save to give up my life." And having spoken, the king swooned. The great queen fell near him. And further Kannaki said, "Today we have seen evidence of the sage's warning: the Divine Law appears in the form of death before the man who fails in his duty. Consort of a victorious king who committed a deed both cruel and unjust, I too am guilty of great sins. Be witness to the cruel deed I perform."

This passage is from *Silappathikaram*, an early epic of excellence in which the justice of the land had been described.

RELEASE OF PRISONERS

A noteworthy point in this connection is the release of prisoners. It would appear that a general amnesty was declared

on the occasion of the celebration of the birthday of the king. This birthday is designated as Perunal, and Perumangalam.. Such general amnesty was also granted on other similar occasions. For example, on the occasion of the founding of the temple for Pattinidevi, Senguttuvan ordered the release of state prisoners like Kanaka and Vijayan as well as other ordinary prisoners.

OFFENCES AND PUNISHMENTS

There were offences of a civil character. One was failure to repay the debts incurred, as will be seen from a reference in the Sirupancamulam, one of the eighteen poems in the category of Kikkanakku. Among the criminal offences were theft, adultery, treason or Rajadroha, assault and so forth. The punishments were of different kinds such as imprisonment, mutilation of limbs, and sentence of death.

WITNESSES

When a certain case was presented to the court, one method of enquiry was by the examination of witnesses, there were then, as now, both false and true witnesses. The Sirupancamulam condemns the witness who deposes to an untruth. The false witness is mentioned as one among the six offenders of a State. The other five are pseudo-Sannyasins, housewives loose in morals, disloyal ministers, adulterers and tale-bearers. In different places of the *Silappathikaram*, deposing as false witness is treated as a great crime. Thus, we see how carefully justice was administered and the dignity of law and order was maintained.

TRIAL OF THE ANCIENT TAMIL COURTS

There is a description of a trial in a twelfth century work Sekkilar's "*Periya Puranam*". It was against the celebrated Saiva Nayanar Sundarar who belonged to the 9th century A. D.

The following account of a mythical trial contained in the *Periya Puranam* of Sekkilar, probably a contemporary of Chola Kulottunga II, may be taken to be illustrative of the system of judicial procedure during the period. The facts of the case were as follows. On the eve of the marriage of Sundaramurti, Lord Siva in the guise of a Brahman appeared before him and claimed to be his bond-slave, in order to save him from falling into the miseries of family life. Sundaramurti who was ignorant as to who the Brahman was, contested his claim; but since the latter insisted on his claim being settled before the marriage took place, both of them agreed to submit their dispute to the law-court at Tiruvennainallur for decision. The plaintiff's case

(*muraipadu*) was first stated in the Sabha of learned persons. The judges raised an objection that the plaintiff was in violation of usage according to which a Brahman was not to be enslaved under any condition. The plaintiff submitted that the grandfather of the defendant had on behalf of himself and his descendants executed a bond to him according to which they were to be his perpetual slaves. The judge admitted the defendant to explain his point. Sundaramurti was so much bewildered that he could not find a satisfactory answer and said that he was an Adi Saiva of the village of which the judges themselves had personal knowledge.

The judges then asked the plaintiff to prove his claim by one of three methods—usage (*atci*), documents (*avanam*) or the testimony of eye-witnesses (*ayalartangaikatci*). On the assurance of the court for the safety of the document, the plaintiff produced the original deed which was in the form of a roll. The Karanattan who took charge of it unrolled it and read out its contents by which the grandfather of the defendant had pledged himself and his descendants to eternal slavery to the Pittan (Siva) of Tiruennainallur. The court satisfied itself with regard to its genuineness by examining its age, contents and signatures of witnesses by comparing it with another document taken out from the record office, and known to have been written in the hand of Sundaramurti's grandfather.

Thereupon the judges pronounced their judgement that the defendant had lost his case, and declared that he was the slave of the plaintiff. In spite of the mythological and supernatural setting in the account of this trial, it may certainly be taken to give a fair idea of the methods of judicial procedure in the Chola period, the evidences that were called in for finding out the truth in a case, and how quickly and impartially the decision was taken and judgement delivered. This particular case proves that great value was attached to documentary evidence for deciding cases. Thus evidences such as the authoritative testimony of good men, constitutional usage, documents and unbroken enjoyment were taken into account in the decision of cases.

CRIMINAL CASES

Much useful information is not available regarding the procedure in the trial of criminal cases. In fact there does not appear to have been any great distinction between the methods in the trial of civil and criminal offences. Among criminal

offences were murder, arson, theft, adultery, forgery, misappropriation of temple or public funds, etc., and the offenders were usually ostracised and declared unfit for participation in administrative work, as for instance, service on the village courts and it was only in cases of dissatisfaction with the decisions given in them that they were taken to the court of the king's officer-in-charge of the administration of the local area like the Nadu.

A few cases of murder and homicide are recorded in inscriptions. Once a Sudra while out on hunting missed his aim and shot a Vellala. The villagers assembled together, found the Sudra guilty of homicide (not amounting to murder) and ordered him to make an endowment of sixty-four sheep in the local temple for burning two lamps in expiation of his guilt.

A few offences were punishable with fines (*Kurra-dandam*). An inscription at Anjaneri gives rates of fines for the following offences. 108 Rupakas for outraging the modesty of a virgin; 32 Rupakas for adultery; 16 Rupakas for the mutilation of ear; 4 Rupakas for bruising the head and 108 Rupakas "if the merchant's son is found to have illicit connection with the female porter and should be caught in the actual act of adultery."

CONCLUSION

From the above description of the trial at the court of Tiruvonnainallur, we learn many procedural details of trial in ancient Tamil courts. It is evident from the account of the trial that the trial and judgements were never arbitrary. In the Sangam period, the court was styled as "Aramkuru Avaiaim". Later in the period of the inscriptions, it was called as "Dharma-sanam." The institution of Aramkuru Avaiaim is an excellent testimony to the high sense of justice of the Tamils. Respect for law, the fundamental right of being heard in full, and trial by impartial and fearless men learned in law — these point to a realisation of the basic importance of the rule of law, which inspired those who ruled us in the South. On the whole we gather the impression that much care was taken to administer justice to the people both by the king and by local administration.



A NEW YEAR POEM

“The situation is tense
but under control”—
A nice expression
of our Doordarshan.

Everyday I can feel
the skull beneath the skin.
Counting the dead bodies
in a city's corridor—
almost a daily ritual.

Ashwatthama is always active
everywhere. Anyhow
this two-year-old child is safe—
they said.
This tiny one
with stitches across her face
survived anyhow.
They also said
an angry axe
finished her parents
in Saturday's sinister night.

After some days
a new year will come
like an obstinate insurance agent.
Once again you will hear
horrors eclipsing my land —
the situation may be tense
but it is always under control.

—PROF. NIRANJANA MISHRA

THE ENGLISH OF MAHATMA GANDHI

A Note on his Style

C. G. K. MURTHY

The period between the two world wars and including both of them has been described as "Gandhian Age in India" by K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar in "Indian Writing in English". With Gandhiji the curtain has rung down on the old Macaulean style marked by ornamental, scholastic and involved sentences with several clauses telescoping into each other. The following is an excerpt from Ambika Charan Mazumdar's presidential address before the Lucknow session of the Indian National Congress (1916).

"There are however those who say 'not yet', 'not yet'. Then 'when'? — asks the Indian nationalist. But here the oracle is dumb and echo only answers — 'when'. Edwin Bevan's parallel of the 'Patient and the steel frame' is cited and the people are strictly enjoined to be in peace and possess their souls in patience until their political Nirvana is accomplished."

This was typical of the old liberal school where the speaker was addressing the educated who were expected to follow the theme and recognize the quotations.

Gandhiji's approach to language was mainly utilitarian. "He used language as a necessary tool just as he used his spectacles, his walking stick or his safety razor. Writing with him was not for writing's sake, nor speaking for speaking's sake, but rather for achieving communication, for conveying information, for converting people to his point of view... Gandhi had neither the time nor the inclination to cultivate the so-called art of writing or speaking. He merely wrote or spoke straight on, and when we read his English today, the words often seem to be insipid or anaemic, with no straining after emphasis,

no colour, no irradiating brilliance, yet they are Gandhi's words, and their very bareness constitutes their strength. Words by themselves are nothing, unless we know where the decimal point is placed, the decimal point is the personality of the writer or speaker." (Prof. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar in *Indian Writing in English*)

Gandhiji's style of writing reflected his character and personality. His main ideal was the realisation of Truth and all his writings have a moral strength. They were written with the purpose of raising the ethical standards of the people as Gandhiji had felt that a strong ethical and moral foundation would keep the social, economic and political values closer to Truth. For Gandhi Truth was synonymous with God or the force behind our creation.

What Gandhi wrote and spoke spanning over a period of four decades has set a new tone in communicating with the masses — service won over selfishness and simplicity over complexity. He started a new style of writing, "His writing reflects his life and is devoid of artificialities. His style is simple, precise and clear. He never used flowery and ornamental language. His utterances went straight into the hearts of the audience." (Sashi Ahluwalia in *Gandhi the Writer*). The following extract from the *Harijan* (26-3-1936) illustrates the point.

"There is nothing in our society today which would conduce to self-control. Our very upbringing is against it. The primary concern of parents is to marry their children anyhow, so that they may breed like rabbits. If they are girls, they are married at as early an age as they conveniently can be, irrespective of their moral welfare. The marriage ceremony is one long drawn out agony of feasting and frivolity. The householder's life is in keeping with the past life. It is a prolongation of self-indulgence. Holidays and social enjoyments are so arranged, as to how one gets the greatest latitude for sensuous living. The literature that is almost thrust on one generally panders to the animal passion. The most modern literature almost teaches that indulgence in it is a duty, and total abstinence a sin."

Gandhiji was very methodical in whatever subject he laid his hands on. He converted his newspapers into viewpapers. His ideas — social, political, economic — as well as the plan of action to achieve those were clearly enunciated in his journals. He wrote on a great variety of topics connected with the lives

of the common people. He had a great knack for selecting the most apt titles for his articles that have a rare evocative quality about them. "Tempering with loyalty", "The puzzle and its solution", "Turning the searchlight inward", "The fiery ordeal" are a few examples in this respect.

Gandhiji's literary achievement is more remarkable because of the fact that he was never a literary man, seldom in his writings did he rise to the height of eloquence and beauty. His interests were more pragmatic than aesthetic. He had no desire or ambition nor even the time to become an artist. His main thought and preoccupation was about his countrymen and his struggle to free them from the foreign yoke. So he wrote with a disciplined simplicity seeking only to make himself understood. The result was one most important quality of literary art, viz., clarity. In all his works Gandhiji never wrote a sentence which failed to express with utmost precision, the thought he had in mind to convey. Gandhiji mastered his medium. He evolved a style which was perfect for his purpose of communication. To read his writings is to think of content and not of style, which means a triumph in the adoption of means to ends.

M. Chalapati Rau (M. C.) writes in *The Press in India* as follows :

"There was not only character but strength of personality in whatever he wrote. To read him was to learn how to use words correctly, with scrupulous regard for their exact meaning. He scorned ornamentation and avoided rhetorical devices. Yet there was eloquence in all that he wrote, compelling clarity and persuasiveness. There was something Biblical in the solemn, little sentences, and those brave words which breathed and burned and sang."

When Gandhiji launched the non-cooperation movement in the 'Twenties he had to clash with many, including Rabindranath Tagore. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar in his *Indian Writing in English* rates Gandhiji's reply to Tagore "The great sentinel" as one of the classics of English prose. Iyengar observes, "There is not one unsure sentence or inapt word from beginning to end. How dignified is the exordium!...The nimble steel flashes and swirls its strength and brilliance, and one is transfixed as in a trance."

Here is an extract :

"I do indeed ask the poet and the sage to spin the wheel as a sacrament. When there is a war, the poet lays

down his lyre, the lawyer his law reports, the school boy his books. The poet will sing the true not after the war is over, the lawyer will have occasion to go to his law books when people have time to fight among themselves. When a house is on fire, all inmates go out, and each one takes up a bucket to quench the fire. When all about me are dying for want of food, the only occupation permissible to me is to feed the hungry.....Our cities are 'not' India. India lives in her seven and a half lakhs of villages, and the cities live upon the villages. They do not bring their wealth from other countries. The cities are brokers and commission agents for the big houses of Europe, America and Japan... .. India is daily growing poorer. The circulation about her feet and legs has almost stopped. And if we do not care, she will collapse altogether The human bird under the Indian sky gets up weaker than when he pretended to retire. For millions it is an eternal vigil or an eternal trance. It is an indescribably painful state which has to be experienced to be realized. I have found it impossible to soothe suffering patients with a song from Kabir. The hungry millions ask for one poem — invigorating food. They cannot be given it. They must earn it. And they can earn it only by the sweat of their brow."

In the above sample it can be observed that certain sentence patterns are used in a repeated manner. There are about 19 sentences in the passage. In these sentences 5 subordinate clauses begin with "when" (a conjunction indicating time). Likewise 3 coordinate clauses begin with "and". On the basis of clause structure and the frequency of conjunctions, it is possible to make some observations on the style of this passage :

1. Gandhiji prefers simple sentences (i. e., sentences each with one finite clause) whenever he introduces a new idea.
2. Then he uses complex or compound sentences to elaborate or illustrate the ideas so introduced.
3. In this passage the organisation of the complex and compound sentences reflects the author's method of dealing with dimensions of time and space. The Temporal Conjunction which occurs with the highest frequency indicates that the author is trying to come to grips with the contemporary situation obtaining in India. Secondly, the author's concern with time is inseparably associated with his concern with space which of course

is his country India. This is attested to by his use of "and" and which establishes a link between time and space. That is, Gandhiji successfully communicates his express concern with his country at his time, his "now" and his "here". Thus the passage illustrates the ability of the author to combine two crucial dimensions of human existence, time and space and to relate them to the contemporary situation. That is why his style is sincere, effective and highly communicative.

It was said Gandhiji's sentences had bareness which of course constitutes their strength. Gandhi himself acknowledged his fallibility with humility. But bareness does not mean lack of grace. Again M. C. says, "Yet in his best moments he was a master of prose, because he combined feeling with argument and matched his mood to the moment. He could write, 'The cow is a poem on pity', 'Prayer is the key to the morning and the bolt of the evening', 'To the hungry, God appears in the shape of bread'. There was grace in whatever he wrote, there was also masculinity. He could be as wise and simple as Solomon, he was as artless as Thoreau; always he had the power of kings and prophets."

OH LORD!

What for is this useless gross body ?
 Make it a string and transmit melodies,
 Make it a brush and paint pictures,
 Make it a chisel and create idols,
 Make it a pen and produce books,
 Make it a cell and radiate light,
 Make it a crane and lift up weights,
 Why worry with a fainted mind ?
 Show that service is real bliss !

VASANTHARAO VENKATA RAO

AHALYA

(A PLAYLET)

PRAPANJAN

Translated from Tamil by P. RAJA

[The stage is plunged in darkness when the curtain rises. When darkness gives way to light, a woman is seen sitting. She seems to be engrossed in some thought, unmindful of her surroundings. From the left of the stage enters sage Viswamitra. He is followed by Rama and then Lahshmana. Viswamitra goes near the woman and calls her by her name ' Ahalya.' But since she sits motionless he raises his voice a few decibels and calls her again.]

Viswamitra : Ahalya ... Ahalya ...

Ahalya : *(with a shudder)* Oh ! *(looks at the guests)*

Viswamitra : Meet Rama and his younger brother Lakshmana, sons of Emperor Dasaratha.

Ahalya : Most welcome princes. Let your visit bring peace and bliss. Be seated.

The two princes salute her with both their hands, before all the three sit around Ahalya)

Rama : Ahalya ! I was told about your life only on the way.

Ahalya : What was said about me ?

Rama : I was told that Indra had fooled you before violating you. As a result your husband abandoned you. It was also said that you had become hardened like a stone, devoid of all feelings.

Ahalya : Not a word is true.

Rama : What ? What is not true ?

Ahalya : You said that Indra had fooled me before violating me. It is a lie. You said that Gautama, my husband, had abandoned me because of that. It is another lie. You further said that I had become hardened like a stone. That is also a lie. From whom did you hear all these blatant lies ?

(Rama looks askance at Viswamitra)

Viswamitra : It was I who narrated your story, Ahalya. Why do you deny the truth ? Didn't Indra enjoy you ? Didn't Gautama forsake you ? Is it not true that you avoid food and sleep ? Is it not true that you have stopped adorning yourself with flowers ? Is it not true that you avoid your friends and relatives ? Speak.

Ahalya : Oh, sage ! You are a friend to every living being in the world. But I can't understand why you have turned an enemy to me ! (*She stands up and moves forward*) These trees on the earth and those birds in the sky and that cascade over there never fail to understand mankind. But it is only man who fails to understand man.

Viswamitra : Have I misunderstood you ? Do you think so ?

Ahalya : I said you have not understood me properly. Listen, O sage ! Rama is brought here to do justice to me. If the case is not elucidated to the judge, there is all likelihood of his passing a wrong verdict ... Rama ! On what basis of law do you propose to try me ?

Rama : According to the code of laws given by Manu and the emperors and wise men for the benefit of mankind.

Ahalya : (*Laughing*) Oh, is it so ? So you accept that your laws are meant only for tribes of men and not for individuals.

Rama : What is man ? He is only a part of mankind, a fraction of the whole.

Ahalya : O, judge ! Your view is fundamentally wrong. You look at man as a part, a fraction. But every individual blessed to live on earth is a whole, a complete being.

Rama : I fully agree with your view that the life of every individual is complete in itself. But he or she must obey the laws made with the greater purpose of uplifting and guiding mankind.

Ahalya : Oh, prince ! You are blessed with a kingdom to rule. The diamond-studded crown and the throne await you. Those who are born to rule either follow blindly what their ancestors have given or simply make laws that are in every way beneficial to them.

Rama : I belong to the first category. It is my duty to maintain what my father Dasaratha and his ancestors have given.

Ahalya : I scoff at you, your ancestors and your blind laws. You never can understand men in the light of their feelings and their attachments, their joys and sorrows. You find fault with men only for their deeds and try them only to give lopsided verdicts.

Viswamitra : Ahalya ! What you have said is wrong. Rama is an establisher of truth.

Ahalya : He tries to establish his truth on others.

Viswamitra : Ahalya ! Your words are contradictory to truth. Remember that that will destroy truth.

Ahalya : Your words only highlight your fear, O sage ! You are viewing my case by substituting the women of your family in the place of Ahalya. You suspect the young men who study under you as Indras. You look at yourself as Gautama, who involves himself in prayer all the time and thinks of his wife when his flesh craves for flesh. Am I not right ? (*No reply*) Speak, O sage, speak.

Viswamitra : Mistakes have to be rectified but not to be justified.

Ahalya : (*Comes back to her seat. Darkness engulfs the stage. When the spotlight is flashed, a painting is seen. It shows a sage with his wife begging alms from a man with hands stretched out.*)

Rama ! Listen to this story now. Being a town-dweller you would hardly have heard of this since it is that of a forest-dweller.

Once it so happened that the kingdom of the Kurus was struck by lightning and was turned to ashes. A sage by name Sakrayana who left the place with his young wife halted in a village of mehouls out of sheer hunger and fatigue... They came across a mahout eating horse-gram and asked him thus :

Sakrayana's Voice : Oh, mahout ! Hunger has numbed my senses. The life-breath is struggling to release itself from this cage. Give me something to eat.

Mahout's Voice : I have nothing to offer you except the left-overs.

Sakrayana's Voice : Help me and my wife by offering at least that.

Ahalya's Voice : Sakrayana and his wife shared the food offered. No sooner did they finish eating than the mahout said :

Mahout's Voice : Drink this water and quench your thirst too.

Sakrayana's Voice : No ! It is defiled by you. I can't drink it.

Sakrayana's Voice : What ! Was not the horse-gram you have taken just now defiled by me ?

Sakrayana's Voice : Had I not taken that, I would have died of hunger. Now that I have eaten to sustain my life-breath, drinking the water offered by you would be an act of greed.

(The lighting is stronger now and all the four are seen. Ahalya gets up and moves towards the downstage)

Ahalya : Sakrayana and I were dying of hunger, O Rama ! Sages like Sakrayana have killed the desire in them for accumulating wealth and developed the quest for greater knowledge. The kings must have seen to it that such sages were fed properly, as fathers do to their children. Instead they provided no food for the hungry and no water for the thirsty. That was why he had to beg for food from the mahout. Now coming to my case, he, who married me in the presence of Agni, God of Fire, and solemnly vowed to be by my side both during joy and sorrow, remained a burnt-out wood when my body was burning with desire. I was to him only a servant and never a wife. He only expected me to collect the dried twigs to keep the sacrificial fire going and gather edible fruits and herbs to him but nothing more...nothing more. A wife is a companion, you say. But in what way did he allow me to remain as his companion ? Am I allowed to start the sacrificial fire ? Or am I allowed to nourish the fire by pouring clarified butter ? Answer me, O sage, you who wish to conquer death, yet wander the earth mortally afraid of it.

Viswamitra : The mind must never be guided by the senses. Know this and try to have a hold on your mind.

Ahalya : Why ? What for ? What for is this enticing beauty ? Why am I blessed with this tempting bosom ? What for are these hands ? The desire to embrace all things on earth is bubbling in me. What is the reason, O sage ? Why did Gautama, who had complete control over his mind, need a wife ? Didn't he have disciples more than enough to answer his beck and call ? Why did he need me ?

Viswamitra ; *(After a silence)* Gautama might have made a mistake. But you were unfaithful to him.

Ahalya : *(Comes back and sits facing Viswamitra)* Ah ! How well are the words coined and stocked only to be used at our whims and fancies ! O sage of sages ! I was never unfaithful to anyone.

(The stage is covered again by darkness. The spotlight is at work. To the left is seen a painting which shows Indra and Ahalya in their prime of youth standing vis-a-vis.)

Indra's Voice : Ahalya, my sweet ! I feel restless if for a moment I forget you and do not join myself with you. Though I am physically present in my firmament, my mental presence is with you. I wish you to be my wife and companion.

Ahalya's Voice : O Indra ! From the day I shed my girlhood and reached womanhood, only you have been in my mind. Your youth is my food. To caress you and be one with you has become my life. You are my husband. Enjoy me, for I am yours. And even as you enjoy me, I too will enjoy you and satisfy my hunger.

(Ahalya's voice continues but in a different tone)
It is true that I loved Indra. It is also true that he loved me. But my father hated him. It was he who didn't allow us to live together. My own father wrecked my life. I considered Indra my husband. But my father married me to Gautama against my wish. With fun and fanfare he set me on fire while friends and relatives stood witnessing it. Marriage alone cannot bind a woman to a man. Is it not foolish to believe that the thread that binds two different flowers binds their scents too ? What my father has bestowed upon Gautama is not me, but only this physical frame born of his loins. What father marries off his daughter according to her wish ? What man sleeps with his wife respecting her feelings ? The man who milks his cow only twice a day, doesn't hesitate to milk pleasure out of his wife any number of times.

Viswamitra : But you can't deny that you lived with Gautama.

Ahalya : Never, O sage! Never have I lived with Gautama. I have lived only with Indra. It was only his light that opened the lids of my virginity. Whenever Gautama embraced me I found in my arms only Indra. The body that lay heavy on me was only with him. My soul had intercourse with him and with no one else.

That was what happened on that night too. All the forest dwellers point their accusing finger at me because of that incident. And on that night...

(Lights go off the stage. To its right is seen a painting which shows a large full moon with a dark background)

Ahalya's Voice : On that auspicious night the full moon was flooding the forest with light. It was a little before daybreak and a cool breeze was flowing into the hermitage. Though my physical eyes were closed, the inner eyes were wide awake. I was dying to see the face I was looking for. I was chanting the name of Indra in the way Mantras are chanted. All my five senses were praying to my master who had enslaved me. Gautama had already left to continue his work — paving his way to the heavens. And I was left alone. Loneliness is my shadow that is born with me and grows with me.

The dream of my heart, the desire of my life, came to be fulfilled on that day, Rama! He came — my Indra — in the form of a tiny round light, like a tilak on the forehead. The tiny light sprouted within me, put forth leaves and finally sent the roots deeper. I became a cloud, while he, the Sun of Wisdom, tore into me. Darkness was devouring us. We were devouring ourselves.

Gautama returned to his hermitage after finishing his morning ablutions. The presence of an unexpected usurper infuriated him. He cursed us. He called me a whore. I laughed. How can I ever be a whore? I have but lived with one man. No woman is a whore if she lives with only one man.

Gautama who once called me his sweet one, now called me a stone. So be it.

(The lighting is stronger now and all the four are seen seated as before. Ahalya gets up and moves towards the downstage and faces the audience.)

Ahalya : O sage! Lord of the Kosala country! You accuse me of having committed a sin? But why are you blind to the sins of Gautama? (*Flaring up*) Gautama lived with one who had no mind to live with him. Is he not a sinner? My father married me to Gautama against my wish. Is he not a sinner? Many women desire to keep paramours, yet don't do so for fear of public opinion. Aren't they sinners? Many women commit adultery, yet go unnoticed. Aren't they sinners? Why does your moral balance fail to weigh them? Are your rules, laws and regulations made only for the innocents? Rama! Never be under the impression that Thataka was the only one who disturbed the meditating sages.

Viswamitra : (*in a calm voice*) Ahalya! You have hurled a stone into the pond. It is sure to create ripples. The lashings of your tongue will certainly disturb the peaceful life of the people here.

Ahalya : Let it do so...What is peace, O sage? Life is peaceful only to those who are bold and valiant. Peaceful life is founded on the strength of the sincerity of one's mind. Fake customs, false rites and blind faiths do not pave the way to the citadel of peace.

(While Ahalya is still seated, all the other three get up)

Rama : I consider the position of Gautama. Ahalya! You argued for and against your own case. Gautama believes that I will be able to find a solution to your problem.

Ahalya : And you think you have found the solution?

Rama : I don't think so. At this moment I believe no one will be able to solve anyone else's problem.

Ahalya : And finally what do you advise?

Rama : Advice? How can I advise you? Act according to the dictates of your conscience. It is not meritorious to act hastily and then die a slow death in the hands of a guilty conscience. It is meritorious to act after a thoughtful while and feel happy later. To you, your life is your own virtue...Let me take leave of you.

- Ahalya : Good! May you be blessed with a life of bliss.
(*Exit Rama and Lakshmana*)
- Viswamitra : I too shall take my leave. May your words of blessing come true in Rama's life! We are on the way to settle his marriage. (*As Ahalya salutes him with both her hands, he raises his hand as in blessing*) May you lead a long married life.
- Ahalya : (*Peering at Viswamitra*) With whom? With Indra or Gautama? (*Viswamitra laughs before he moves away...Ahalya sits as in the beginning of the play. Her eyes are fixed in a gaze. Engrossed in deep thought she forgets herself.*)

MUSIC OF THE SOUL

I have deliberately simplified
The circumstances of my life.
Set aside all who revel in malice.
Family politics I scorn and despise.

Poetry is the music of the soul
All that is vulgar and harmful
Keeps this music mute.
If the soul should sing it needs —

Quietus. A keeping away
From those who are at unrest.
The quintessence of the being
Should be calm and at rest.

The soul needs the music of the birds
The wind's orchestra refreshes
The plants and the trees, the sky,
And the earth, all feed the poetic soul.
The friendship of sincere people,
The devotion of good servants,
The love of one's immediate family,
The caring of those who help in sickness.

All these and other innocent contacts
Of the human family warm the soul.
From these experiences are born —
The music of the soul — Poetry.

BETTY PAUL

INVOCATION TO MOTHER COMPASSION

MRS. C. VEDAVATHI

Wherever you are, I can recognise you,
Since you happen to be
The sign of some stirring
In the innermost recesses of my heart !

At some considerable distance of time,
When I was still in the womb of my mother,
You were the angel that showered ambrosia on me
By coming to my aid, carefully fondly holding me.

How many coats of sandal paste applied,
Can be a match to your refreshing coolness ?

On this land of mine,
Since the moment I came into this world
As a new-born infant,
Many a time I saw you, and was overwhelmed,
You the Ganges of mercy
With a heart, brimful with love.

When I, for the first time, had the touch of you,
I was just an infant in the baby-linens,
Being unable to lie on my sides ;
Since then, with the tender touches of your gracious looks,
You have installed me here, ceremoniously anointing me.

That is why I said, I can recognise you,
I even said :
Even if you are a little ripple
That would do for my recollection of you !

But you are not to be seen in these times,
You have disappeared
As if everything has evaporated due to burning fires.

Where is your sweet, serene, beautiful face ?
 Has it been scorched
 By the poisonous tongues of flames villainy ?

You are the synonym for the humanness,
 But you have gradually gone out of sight.
 I, who is well acquainted with you,
 Am in the search of you on the surface of this earth,
 Looking for you, who is not to be seen at all!

But in this my quest,
 The blood-red eye of the empty earth
 Is hideously frightening me!

The traces of the past acquaintances,
 Your throbbing moist smearings,
 Are there before me dancing and gesticulating.
 Poor blade of grass,
 Drenched throughout the night
 In the drizzle of the due drops,
 Emaciated, being exposed to the morning fog,
 Alas, when the tender blade of grass was struck,
 You came with your warm infinite mercy
 With soft touches of your warm lustrous hands,
 You gracefully wiped out its tears.

I know your grief knows no bounds,
 At the sight of distress or affliction,
 You rain like a cloud,
 All the afflicted, all the victims of pain and suffering
 Are your kith and kin,
 All the souls in distress are your near and dear ones.

How many times did I see you, watch you ?
 You are seen in the Mother Earth's crevices,
 When it struggles to pour life into the seed
 That was sown in its depths,
 So that it may sprout and fructify.

I know you will be present in your sweet demeanour
 In that handful morsel of food
 That is brought out by a kind housewife
 Responding to a starving soul's call.

I have already seen you
 In the kind looks of a Buddha, a Christ and a Mahatma
 Raised on the ruins of the harsh life of the diseased,
 the mortals and the "beings in existence."

INVOCATION TO MOTHER COMPASSION

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And now,
 You have become an indistinct streak
 Which is difficult to view.
 You are untraceable in the depths of these hollows
 Where Truth, righteousness, ethics and justice are buried.
 I do not know where you have tottered and fainted.
 In that earthquake of violence and counter-violence
 That erupted amidst rivalry, malice and jealousy.
 What befell you in these wastelands
 Where hatred, religious bigotry, deceit roam as goblins?
 Not even a trace of your figure is seen
 In the crushed, bruised, charred remnants,
 As honour, life, body and character
 Are violated by the intoxicated cruel hands!

Constant battles of life on the one hand,
 Vanity, pomp and false pretences on the other,
 Want, despair and wretchedness on one side,
 Unfettered play of naked swords on the other;
 Parched, cracked, thirsty lands there,
 Arsons caused by the politics of hypocrisy here;
 What a strange scenario!

For this crisis-ridden humanity
 O, Mother Compassion,
 Your presence is an immediate necessity,
 Your compassionate looks
 Are enough to soften the hard-hearted,
 Your tears are enough
 To put out the conflagration of bigotry.
 O, sentiment of compassion,
 You are the peace personified,
 You are the embodiment of forbearance,
 Non-injury to beings, and non-violence are your weapons,
 Amity and good-heartedness prevail where you happen to be,
 You smoothen the hearts.
 My salutations to you called Goddess Karuna.
 Pray, do not move away from humans in disgust,
 Please do not disappear altogether from the surface of Earth.

(Translated from the original Telugu by D. RAMALINGAM)

The Wayward Woman in the "Serious Plays" of Sir Arthur Wing Pinero

M. VENKATESWARA RAO

"Frailty, thy name is woman", said Prince Hamlet. This general invective against all womankind is based upon Hamlet's experience with his mother, Gertrude. It expresses his disgust at his mother's hasty and adulterous marriage with his father's brother. Since the first decade of the seventeenth century, the wayward woman has been figuring in the English drama. The wayward woman has become a stock character in the modern English drama. Writing as he did in 1914, in his book *Aspects of Modern Drama* Frank D Chandler observes, "In the recent drama few types of character have been more frequently portrayed than the wayward woman. Her waywardness has been represented as a matter of the past or of the present, as something repented of or persisted in. It has been represented also as trivial or grave, the result of passion or of principle. Among recent playwrights three have achieved special success in analysing this character".⁷ Among these playwrights who depict the wayward heroine, the name of Pinero figures prominently. The wayward woman made her appearance in the plays of Oscar Wilde also — Mrs. Erlynne, Mrs. Arbuthnot and Mrs. Cheveley. But Pinero's wayward women are superior to those of Wilde. For Pinero is a master analyst of the feminine heart. Four of Pinero's heroines, figuring in his "serious plays", are taken as types of the wayward — Mrs. Tanqueray, Mrs. Ebbamith, Iris and Letty.

Thomas H. Dickson, in his *The Contemporary Drama of England* says, "A new era in modern English drama dates from the performance of 'The Second Mrs. Tanqueray' (1893)".² It is a serious play, a play of ideas, of Pinero's mature period. It is Pinero's masterpiece. The play shows that a woman with a past cannot shake off her past. Socially a woman with a past has no

future. H. Hamilton Fyfe, in his book *Sir Arthur Wing Pinero : Playwright : A Study* says about Paula Ray, who later becomes the second Mrs. Tanqueray, "The past hangs its loathsome weight about her memory; the present leaves her unsatisfied and ill-content; the future terrifies her with its long vistas of weariness and horror".⁵

The question posed by the play is : Can marriage clothe with respectability the woman who has sinned earlier ? The drama points to the simple moral that no social regeneration or rehabilitation is possible for a woman with a past. Twenty-seven-year old Miss Paula Ray, who was once Mrs. Jarman, becomes the second wife of the widower, Aubrey Tanqueray. Mr. Tanqueray knows that she is a woman with a past ; he knows something about her past also, but not all of it. He feels that she has never met a man so far who has treated her well. He wants to mete out good treatment to her. Mr. Tanqueray has a daughter by his first wife, a nineteen-year-old girl, named Ellean. All these years she has been brought up in convents in France or Ireland. Unfortunately for the Tanquerays, she decides to come home and stay with her parents. Soon after the marriage of Paula Ray with Tanqueray, they shift to their country house. Because of Paula's questionable past, they are socially ostracised. The step-daughter, Miss Ellean, also has been cold and hostile towards her step-mother. Mrs. Tanqueray. Paula hungers for the girl's love and affection, but senses her hostility from the beginning. The husband feels ill at ease in exposing his daughter to the harmful influence of Paula's light and careless nature. So, he permits his daughter to go to Paris with a neighbour, Mrs. Cortelyon. In Paris Ellean falls in love with a British soldier stationed in India. He is Captain Hugh Ardale. She brings him to their country house to introduce him to her parents. As Paula turns to receive him, the past, which she has thought forever banished, confronts her. He and she lived in London long ago as "lovers". In fact, she was his mistress. So, she cannot allow her step-daughter, Ellean, to marry him. She informs her husband, Aubrey, of her past relationship with Hugh Ardale. Peremptorily he bans all contacts between Ellean and Hugh Ardale. Ellean blames Paula for stopping her marriage with the man she has loved. Suddenly the truth dawns upon Ellean. She declares that right from the beginning she has always known what she is — a scarlet woman. Paula protests — "Ellean, I'm a good woman. I swear I am. I've always been a good woman." The patient Tanqueray encourages her. They will begin life afresh elsewhere. But Paula is now convinced that she cannot reconcile her present with her past. "I believe the

future is only the past again, entered through another gate... Tonight proves it." So, Mrs. Tanqueray kills herself. As Clayton Hamilton puts it, "The reason why Paula Tanqueray is unable to escape from, or obliterate, her past is mercy that her past is still, and ever more, a part of her".⁴

Pinero made one more attempt at the play of ideas in "The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith." (1895) It was a period of abnormal interest in Ibsen. Pinero had discovered that he could throw ideas on the table for the wise to wag their heads over, and that it is possible for a story to carry deeply-concealed meanings. He discovered that woman and sex are problems. H. Hamilton Fyfe has observed, "*The Notorious Ebbsmith* shows more than any other of the plays the influence of Ibsen, and especially the influence of Ibsen's studies in femininity". It enforces the lesson that a platonic relation between a man and a woman is impossible for nine out of every ten women. It is more thought-provoking than any other of Pinero's plays.

The heroine of *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith* differs from Letty and Iris in that she is always a thinker, a rational radical whose waywardness is due to her strength. Agnes Ebbsmith is a woman of revolutionary ideas, caught from her father, and deepened by her own unhappy experience of wedded life. After eight years of married life, one year of youthful indulgence and seven as his mistress, her husband dies and gives her freedom. As a nurse she becomes enamoured of her patient, Lucas Cleeve, who too has been unhappy in marriage. They decide to work together, and their relations are to be completely free from physical passion. But Lucas fails to keep his promise. The man in him betrays himself. He presents her with a beautiful gown. Bit by bit she comes to love him and complacently dons the beautiful dress he has bought for her. As Fyfe says, "Her head resents the intrusion of the flesh-and-blood element, but her heart holds her back from any attempt at renunciation". Lucas, to set at rest all scandal, wants to return to his wife and yet maintain in secret his relations with Agnes. Then she rebels. After she had "only one hour in a woman's life", she leaves a card for Lucas: "My hour is over". Agnes Ebbsmith learns the futility of defying a social institution. She learns the weakness of human nature that renders such institutions essential.

In "Iris" (1901) Pinero had a serious purpose to indicate. But as soon as one enquires what that purpose is, agreement vanishes among the critics. Some ask that Mrs. Bellamy (Iris) be considered as the victim of circumstances. Some maintain

that Iris is merely weak, not wicked, and that Pinero meant to show how wrong it is to let oneself drift or to be too fond of soft cushions and the sunny side of the Street of Human Life. A third suggestion is that Iris is a thoroughly bad woman. A fourth is, that she is at heart a thoroughly good woman, sorely sinned against, and so on. Iris Bellamy alternates all the time between two men. She loves Laurence Trenwith truly, but she does not want to marry him, because he is poor and because her late husband's will says that she will lose her fortune if she marries again. She is selfish and her selfishness colours every act of her life. She will not have a poor man for a husband, but she has no reluctance to become his mistress. But Trenwith declines to live upon her money. Iris knows her own weakness. "Poor, weak, sordid Iris", she calls herself "who must lie in the sun in summer, before the fire in winter, who must wear the choicest laces, the richest furs, whose eyes must never encounter any but the most beautiful objects." Accustomed as she is to a life of luxury, she will not go to Canada to live ranch in British Columbia. But she promises Trenwith that she will wait for him to come back and marry her. When she loses her fortune through the embezzlement of the lawyer she trusted, Mr. Archib Kane, she succumbs to the temptations offered by her millionaire admirer, Maldonado. She uses his cheque book and lives in the flat that he has provided for her. When Lawrence Trenwith returns to England after four years, she confesses to him what she was forced to do, and gives excuses for so doing. But Trenwith will have none of her, after this. He leaves her. Maldonado, who overhears her talk with Trenwith, is enraged by what he thinks her treachery—enjoying his money and loving his rival. He turns her out into the night. Thus, Iris falls between two stools from her weakness. In the opinion of Frank Chandler, Iris is the weakest of the three—the other two being Paula Ray and Agnes Ebbsmith. Hamilton Fyfe, whom I have quoted earlier, has this to say of her, "She deceives herself, she deceives her lover, she deceives her friends".⁷ He points out that Dante would have placed the soul of Iris Bellamy in the worst part of Inferno, reserved for those who think of their own selfish interests alone. As W. D. Dunkel remarks, the reaction of the audience to her fall is "a matter of horror rather than pity, revulsion of the emotion rather than catharsis through awe and admiration".⁸

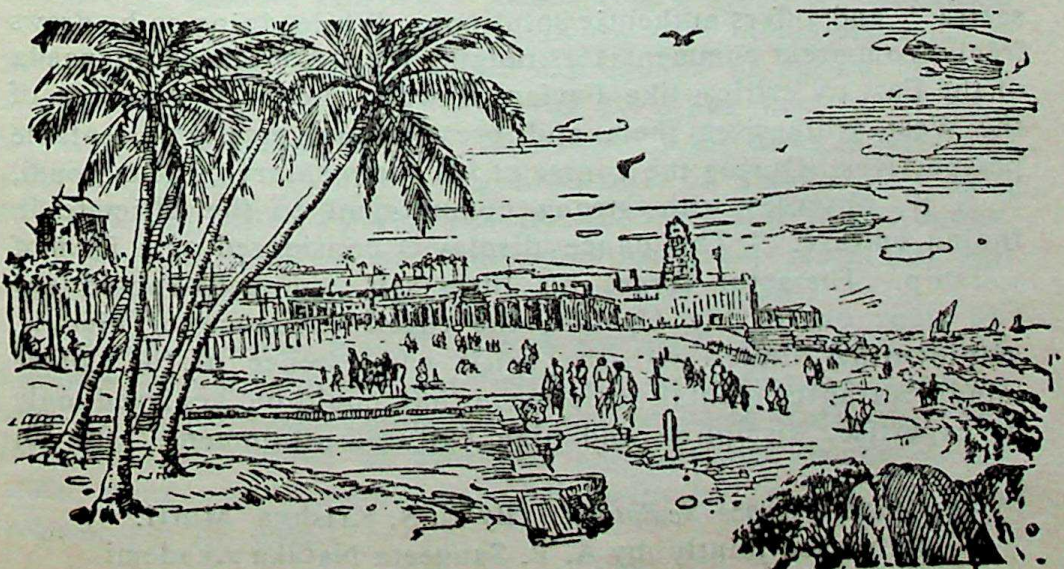
In "Letty", (1903) Pinero has drawn a heroine tempted like Iris to follow the line of least resistance. As Walter Lazenby remarks, "Letty is a comedy of manners which with subtle irony demonstrates the gradual disillusionment of its heroine, leading

to a healthy, realistic adjustment of her life in an epilogue".⁹ Her real name is Elizabeth Shell. She is a clerk in a bucket-shop. Attracted by her good looks, her employer Bernard Mandeville offers to marry her, in spite of the gap in their social status. But she cares nothing for him, but is tempted by the comforts that he can give her. Meanwhile, she has been fascinated by Nevill Letchmere, a customer of the firm, who wishes to save her from the unwelcome overtures of her employer. At first Nevill does not tell her that he is a married man with a child, and that he has been separated from his wife. When Letty learns the truth, she returns his presents and wants to break with him. But the other alternative of marrying her employer who is aggressive, vulgar and bullying, throws her back into the arms of Nevill Letchmere. She surrenders to his proposal of being his mistress, not for money he offers her, but for the love she has felt for him. When she is on the brink of this social gaffe, she receives news that Nevill's sister, Florence, mismated, has eloped with her admirer, Coppinger Drake. Letty recognises in Mrs. Ivor Crosbie's (Florence) mistake a forecast of their own proposed action. The good in Letty recoils. She begs Letchmere to save her as the only reparation he can make for having neglected to save his sister. He lets her go. Abandoning her social ambitions, she marries the photographer, Richard, who belongs to her own social status and sphere. In the Epilogue, the events of which happen two and half years later, we see Letty happily settled in life, with a baby daughter. Says Frank D. Chandler "Letty is quite natural — a well-meaning, weak, affectionate, vacillating creature, who by a narrow chance avoids the shoals and rocks that threaten her, and slips into the smooth waters of a bourgeois marriage."

One can take comfort from the thought that these wayward women portrayed atonement for their deeds in one way or another. Those who are wayward from malice or weakness pay with anguish and death. Those who are wayward from principle fare a little better. The moralists need not entertain apprehensions that the modern drama which has dealt so freely with sex relations will corrupt its devotees. Neither need the women who attend these plays resent their over-frequent exhibition of feminine waywardness. With few exceptions, the men in such dramas (Wilde's and Pinero's) are even more to be condemned than their wayward sisters.

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WHEN STONES DANCE *

DR. DHARA RAMANADHA SASTRY

N. S. Krishna Murti, popularly known as N. S. K., is a multifaceted personality. A scholar, writer, critic and a connoisseur with a rich heart, N. S. K. has devoted his life to the indepth study of arts and letters and the present volume is a creditable labour of love exuding pedagogy in addition to the above attributes.

It is said that the highest peak of Indian culture is Natya. This comprehensive art, Darsana to be apt, encompasses the major art forms like literature, music, sculpture and painting and what is more, there is not an art, a science, a craft and a pedagogy that is extraneous to Natya. The earlier part of the thesis is devoted to a pithy introduction of Natya. Various facets of Natya believed to have manifested through Bharata's "Natyasastra" dealt in a sequential order provides a bird's-eye-view of Natya to lay readers, non-Indians in particular. Having provided a background, N. S. K. proceeds to discuss age-old riddles of "Natyasastra" and offers authentic solutions. While doing so he draws freely from great commentators ranging from Abhinavagupta to the East to critics like Favian Bowers and Kay Ambrose of the West, synthesises them and presents universally acceptable perspectives. During the course of his commentary on Kuchipudi, N. S. K. observes with strong commitment to the ultimate in Indian culture. "The dance display is considered as a form of worship. The actor forges his little self, the deep-rooted ego and steps out of the Upadhi, the caged existence of himself, and identifies himself with the spirit and essence of the 'other mind', a transcendental experience that could be achieved only by expertise, discipline and high cultural attainment." (p. 40)

* *Andhra Dance Sculpture* : By N. S. Krishna Murti.
Published jointly by A. P. Sangeeta Nataka Akademi
and A. P. Lalitakala Akademi. Price : Rs. 50.

He is one with Kay Ambrose who said "...and as she (India) absorbs everything in her philosophy, so she can show everything in her dance". To know Indian dance is to know India. Lord Brahma created Natya taking the text from Rigveda, music from Sama, gestures from Yajur and Rasa from Adharvana. This idea fortifies the traditional Indian belief that, after all, arts and pedagogy lead to self-realisation.

N. S. K. proceeds to discuss the specifics like *Jarjara* (Banner prop), its antiquity, historical changes, etc., and other concepts in depth. Thus taking a leap into the centre of the theme, i. e., the multiple accessories of Natya, the author discusses the descent of Natya, Natyasala (theatre), Poorvaranga (curtain raising process), aesthetics, Nritta (mute drama with crude movements), Nritya (dance), Natya (acting and Chaturvidhabhinaya), Hastabhinaya (gesticulations of hands), Charis and Gatis (movements). Natyadharmi and Lokadharmi (the real and artistic in dance and drama), Chaturvidhabhinayaas (four modes of acting and dance i. e., Angika—physical movement, Aharya—make-up, Vachika—speech and Satvika—manifestation of feeling on the body) among other things with great scholastic elan. Good number of quotations from well-known authorities on the subject add to the critical tenor of the book. N. S. K. not only refers to many Indian writers on Natya from Bharata to the modern, but also touches the core of the relevant topic on hand thus providing the reader with a fish-eye perspective of many authorities on the subject, thus playing the role of an educator also.

However, N. S. K.'s forte lies in the fact that he attempts with rich success, a probing study of Andhra sculpture in relation to Natya. An accepted authority on sculpture as N. S. K. is, he discusses in minute detail the aesthetics, science and dynamics of many sculptural marvels of Andhra and interprets them as living monuments and chiselled expressions of subtle nuances of dance poses. The reader is treated to a fine analysis of both the words of Silpa and Natya. Starting with the three in Sthanaka pose and ending with the dance posture of Trivikrama, these 91 plates represent all that is best in Andhra sculpture and dance. The commentary on these poses combines great sculptural and Natyasashtra knowledge on the part of the author.

To sum up, the earlier part of the treatise is an authentic commentary on "Natyasastra" with all its ramifications and the later part is the interpretation of its splendour in sculpture. The total experience is one of synthetic appreciation benefitting the connoisseur and laymen alike. All kudos to N. S. K. and his *magnum-opus* to date.

The plates of sculptures are given in a sequential bunch and the commentary on them is given separately, thus robbing the reader of a facility to a coordinated study. A single plate and relevant commentary on the same page would have been better. This apart, the A. P. Sangeeta Nataka Akademi and A. P. Lalitakala Akademi have rendered a great service to the reading public through the book.

SEALED WITH SMILE

PROF. KOTA S. R. SARMA

When loneliness smiled at me,
 I kindly stared at her.
 Engaging digits in her locks,
 I scanned the slipping stars.
 How softly her silent feet
 Could make this vacant seat!
 I find her inside of me,
 Her lips still sealed with smile.
 With sun from the rosy dawn,
 Across the dewy lawn,
 O Sunny Green, you and me!
 No more melancholy we!

TWO MORE BLANKS

The pour of all my melting art,
 How fails to green your soul, my dear!
 Perhaps, it is my broken heart,
 Wherein you leaf — with a film of tear!
 I'll seek you in your dear confines,
 Till I, among the ruins, find
 Myself alone, with handful of lines,
 When you're echoless, and I'm blind.

BOOK REVIEWS

Mahayana Buddhist Meditation : Theory and Practice : Edited by Minoru Kiyota. Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi-7. Price : Rs. 150.

There are two major traditions in the Mahayana Buddhist thought and practice : Indo-Tibetan and Sino-Japanese. Their meditational techniques differ though the goal is very much the same. Here are nine papers by specialists contributed to the festschrift volume in honour of Dr. Robinson who was a noted scholar and guide in Mahayana studies. The meditations dwelt upon are naturally of different types : Minoru Kiyota writes on Devotional meditation ; Leon Hurvitz on Mindfulness ; Charlene McDermott on Yogic direct awareness as means of valid cognition ; Geshe Sopa on the two leading Principles of Buddhist Meditation.

Yuichi Kakiyama narrates an interesting incident in the history of Buddhism in Tibet in the 8th century. A Chinese monk Hva-shan was propounding the theory of sudden enlightenment " which maintained that one can attain perfect emancipation instantaneously by means of mystic intuition and without the accumulation of learning, moral merits, and gradual training in meditation." The contemporary Tibetan king, Khrisong sde-tsang, invited Santarakshita and later Kamalasila for a public debate on the Indian theory of gradual enlightenment vs. sudden illumination. Kamalasila won and the occasion marked the beginning of the waning of the influence of Chinese Zen in Tibet. Kamalasila argued that a Bodhisattva can attain the highest enlightenment only by a combination of *karuna*, *upaya* and *prajna*, with a prolonged training and discipline.

There are helpful lights on the various levels of meditation, the practice of " emptiness " and the role of concentration in the practice.

M. P. PANDIT

Adi Sankara : The Saviour of Mankind. Edited by S. D. Kulkarni. Bhagavan Vedavyasa Itihasa Samsodhana Mandira (BHISHMA), B 7-8, Shreepal Apartments, Panch Pakhadi, Thane-400 602. Price : Rs. 240.

This is the second publication of BHISHMA, an ambitious project aimed at publishing 18 volumes on Indian history — social, political and cultural — and presenting a correct chronology, based on authentic sources. This work is a study of Sankara's life, philosophy and message of love and integration to humanity. This is prepared after consulting the available Sankaracharitras and Mathaamnaayas. After a thorough examination of internal and external evidences, 509 B. C is fixed as the year of Sankara's birth.

It is further stated that Sankara after establishing the four Mutts on the four quarts assumed the leadership of the Sarvajna Peetha at Kanchi. Life sketch of Sankara in detail and short notes on his four disciples are given. Sankara's tour throughout India is correlated with his Stotras of different gods. Twelve important Stotras, in Samskrit with English translation, are a source of inspiration to all devotees. Dialogue with Mandana-misra is dealt with in detail.

Above all, the first chapter entitled "Constructive introduction to Advaita Vedanta" is the crest jewel of this work. It is a succinct, but clear and analytical exposition of the Advaita philosophy with all its subtle nuances. Sree Ramanuja's seven charges levelled against Advaita are met with and rebutted. That Sankara is not a pseudo Buddhist is established. Many such misgivings are cleared and doubts dispelled.

The intrinsic value of this work can be understood from the fact that a noted Christian Bishop at Bombay, who had scant respect, and nothing but disdain, for Sankara and his teachings, confessed in writing his ignorance of Sankara after reading this book.

B. KUTUMBA RAO

1) *The Philosophy of a Guru* 2) *Vedanta Revalued and Restated* : Both by Nataraja Guru. Published by Narayana Gurukula, Srinivasapuram, Varkala—695 145.

Late Narayana Guru was a great thinker and saint of renown. Nataraja Guru, the author of these two books under review, was his disciple. He founded the Narayana Gurukula. *Atmopadesa Satakam* and *Darsanamala* are two of Narayana Guru's precious writings. They propound Advaita philosophy.

The first book under review contains English translation of one hundred verses. This book is mainly a commentary on those verses, arranged topic-wise. Guru's philosophy is also summarised in the last chapter. The purport of the Slokas is elucidated upon in the light of the old and the latest findings in mathematics, linguistics physical sciences, metaphysics, Western philosophies and psychology, etc.

Maayaa as understood in Guru-philosophy is the overall philosophical category of all possible errors, starting from simple optical illusions through eidetic representations of phenominalism, to the noblest and subtlest forms of philosophic error even though such factors as science (*Vidya*) and nescience (*avidya*) and nominalism and conceptualism. All horizontal factors are meant to be covered by this omnibus term Maayaa, and it stands equally for the negativity by Hegel, and the uncertainty principle of Heisenberg. It comprises all phenomenological, eidetic, ontological or psychological presentiments." (P 141) This book abounds with such statements as these.

The second book *Vedanta Revalued*, takes up some statements of the Upanishads and of Sankara and analyses them in the light of the modern sciences and Guru's philosophy. According to the author, Vedanta is the science of sciences or the philosophy of sciences, expressed by the seers of India in a picturesque language which he calls proto-language, which has always been adopted by seers at all times and climes. Relying on this protolinguism the author revises, revalues and restates Vedanta. The concepts of Sat, Chit and Ananda and their relationship is thoroughly examined.

The chapter dealing with the Absolute as word-value significance should be studied carefully. The author declares that Sankara's Vedanta rests finally on semantics. The section entitled "Schematic protolinguism in Vedanta", favourite examples in Vedanta, Seven questions and answers in Bhagavadgita are worth reading. The book closes with a summarized running review. An explanatory glossary of technical terms, if appended, will highly enhance the value and usefulness of this invaluable work.

B. KUTUMBA RAO

Tennis Players of Andhra: By Dr. A. Prasanna Kumar. Triveni Publishers (P) Ltd., Machilipatnam. Price Rs. 20.

Dr. A. Prasanna Kumar, Professor, Department of Politics, Andhra University, is a seasoned writer and journalist. His doctoral thesis on Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya is a monumental work and is considered to be a standard reference book. He has to his credit three more books and hundreds of articles in

newspapers and magazines, including "Triveni". The book under notice is a collection of fifty articles on famous tennis players. These sketches were published earlier in *The Indian Express* (Vijayawada) and were very well received by the lovers of the game. These articles are the result of sincere effort on the part of the author who has gathered the material from several sources, including personal interviews with veteran players.

The book opens with a fine sketch of C. Ramaswami who excelled not only in tennis but also in cricket and hockey. He represented India in the Davis Cup and he was a member of the cricket and hockey teams who played a series of test matches in England in 1936. Then follows Narumanchi Narayana-murti, who was the first player to put Andhra's on the tennis map. He was admired by renowned British players and he, in his turn, inspired many young tennis players. Readers would be delighted to notice the careers of famous tennis players like Ghaus Mohammed, N. Krishnaswamy, P. L. Narayana Rao, R. V. V. S. Prasad, N. Rama Rao, M. Balachandra Rao (Baachi), M. R. Appa Rao, S. P. Mishra, J. Veerabhadra Rao and a host of tennis luminaries.

Dr. Prasanna Kumar, who is a brilliant sports commentator of Davis Cup ties and major cricket matches, presents here charming pen portraits of a galaxy of tennis players who brought fame to Andhra Pradesh. The book makes very interesting reading and should be read by all lovers of the game — particularly the younger generation.

BHAVARAJU

From Crisis to Liberation (The Gita's Gospel in Sri Aurobindo's Light): By H. Maheswari. The Aurobindo Book Distribution Agency, Pondicherry-2 Price: Rs. 25.

When Sri Aurobindo was in Alipur jail he had a unique experience of the Divine. Sri Krishna placed the *Gita* in his hands. Sri Krishna's strength entered into him. Sri Aurobindo had the divine vision Vasudevassarvam. It was after that vision that Sri Aurobindo wrote twenty-four essays on *Gita*. To those that cannot wade through those essays, this book as an introduction and guide to it, is highly useful. It gives the essence of Sri Aurobindo's views.

The idea conveyed by the word *Lokasamgraha* is explained as follows: "As such the life of the people is to advance by following the leading example. In that advancement and evolution is included the development of spiritual consciousness and also conscious and highly developed performance of action 'Karmakusala' have their great significance." (p. 27)

“ The purpose of Avatara is to help man to attain to the divine, to inspire man for a divine life, to establish the ideal of divine knowledge and divine work, to secure and to enthuse man for the perfection of divine consciousness and divine will by His living example. ” (p. 36) Thus Sri Aurobindo's individual approach is there in many interpretations which we can find here.

B. K. SASTRY

SAMSKRIT

Goda Sahasra Kamala Maalika : By K. S. Ramanujacharya. Sri Goda Grandhamaalaa, Musunuru - 521 207. Price : Rs. 8.

This book is a valuable addition to the Stotra literature in Samskrit. It is akin to the *Lalita Sahasranaama Stotra* in some respects. Goda's life, her prayers, teachings, her form and beauty and her deep attachment to Srihari are all portrayed and described in the thousand names that are but sentences. There is no “ naama ” that is either repetitive or insignificant. Author's command of Samskrit language reflects therein. A minor poem “ Goda Suprabhatam ” is prefixed to the Sahasranaama, as though to rouse Goda from her sleep so that she may hear this prayer. It is highly mellifluous and appealing.

“ KAASYAPA ”

SANSKRIT - ENGLISH

Upanishads in Sankara's own words, Part I : By Vidyavachaspati V. Panoli. The Matrubhumi Printing & Publishing Co., Ltd., Calicut. Price : Rs. 170.

The book under review, containing four Upanishadic texts, Isa, Kena, Katha and Mandukya with the Karikas of Gaudapada, in Samskrit, together with a correct English translation, exhaustive explanatory notes and above all, an inspiring foreword by the well known savant Sri V. R. Krishna Iyer, a retired Judge of the Supreme Court, is unique in many respects. For the first time we have here references to Karikas on the Isavasya Upanishat, written by Gobhila and Narada. Interpretations therein are compared with those of Sankara. Similarly interpretations of Sri Aurobindo, Narayanaguru and Vivekananda are also referred to. In his introduction Sri Panoli, in addition to citations, points out the significance of the word Upanishat and narrates in brief the life of Sankara and his philosophy.

The English translation is elegant. The texts of Karikas in Samskrit of Gobhila and Narada should have also been included in this volume. To understand the text proper in detail many more explanations are necessary. To point out one, Mandukya II/26 cannot be understood without some elucidation. These

in no way detract the overwhelming merits of the work. We eagerly await the release of the other volumes.

B. K. SASTRY

Prasamarati Prakarana : By Vaachaka Srimad Umasvati. Edited by V. M. Kulkarni. Published by Mrs. Nita M. Bhogilal, Near Nagari Eye Hospital, Ellis Bridge, Ahmedabad - 380 006.

This is a Jaina work consisting of 313 Sanskrit verses with English translation and explanatory notes written by Mahesh Bhogilal. It is more didactic than philosophic like Bhartrihari's Subhashitas. The great passions, Karma, politeness and humility, the nine concepts of reality, the stoppage of the activities of mind, speech and body and the rock-like state are some of the topics dealt with.

Many preachings are illustrated by fine examples. *c. f.* "Just as the body of one who has massaged it with oil gets covered by dust particles, similarly the Atman which has become sticky by the presence of Raga and Dvesha gets covered by the Karma particles" (of the eight types mentioned in verse 34) and this is called bondage. Verses 41 to 45 exemplify the harm done to us by our sensory organs and these echo the teachings in Sankara's *Vivekachudamani*. Sometimes preaching is illustrated by a story also. Thus this precious book is a practical guide to a perfect life and has its universal appeal.

"KAASYAPA"

TELUGU

Praacheena Andhra Mahaakavula Devi Pratipatti : By Dr. Kundurti Satyanarayana Murthy. For copies: Kundurti Baalaa Tripurasundari, Door No. 11-47-46, Kalyanamandapam Veedhi, Vijayawada-520 001. Price : Rs. 116.

The word "pratipatti" can variously mean respect, intelligence, skill, knowledgeability and attainment. The work on hand is an effort to investigate the "pratipatti" of the ancient Telugu poets (beginning with Nannaya to the end of Srinatha's Age) with reference to Devi, whatever it may mean. The word "Devi" is derived from the root "divi" which carries at least some ten senses. It is generally understood in the sense of "The Effulgent". "The Sporting", "The Ever-Winning" Sakti or Power, the prime mover of all the creation. The Devi Sukta of Vedic literature is well-known as also the Durgaa Sukta. This latter is said to be a non-Vedic Deity. The history of Sakta literature traces the worship of Durga as a Mother-Goddess to the area of Caspian Sea under the name of "Truqqa". Perhaps the name of Turkey is also a cognate word.

Historians say that the tradition of "Ishtadevataastuti" in literary works started in the courts of Kalachuri kings and spread to the Rashtrakuta and Chalukyan courts influencing mainly the Kannada and Telugu works. While the Sanskrit works contain just one or two Slokas the Kannada and Telugu works contain more number of verses wherein the poets expressed their devotion to various gods and goddesses. Any investigation regarding the Devi or Sakti worship has to remember that the Alamkaara Saastra has used the word "sakti" in the sense of "pratibhaa" connoting the literary talent or genius *saktirnipunataa loka saastra kaavyaadyavekshananaat*, etc.) This makes it appear as though all the poets are worshippers of Sakti. Of course, poetic flow is one of the concomitant results of all Devi worship but the converse cannot be taken to be true. The second point is that one has to bear in mind the influence of tradition on the generality of poets, and when a poet devotes a verse for Saraswati in a tradition-bound manner one has to be wary in declaring him to be a devotee of the goddess. One finds it difficult to believe, as the author seems to suggest, that Nannayabhatta, nay all the Eastern Chalukyan kings, were Srividya Upaasakas. The author's views regarding Nannichoda, Tikkana and Gona Buddhareddy are others that came under this category. The difficulty arises because of the fact the author chooses to attribute any mention of the Devi or Sakti to the poet's devotion to Her. Ketana's mention of "Bhairavi" is a clear statement of his devotion to the Deity and has to be accepted as such. Tikkana's mention of Durga in Virata Parva is embedded in the story and cannot make him a Sakta even if he has added a few more details than its original. The poet being a Saakta and the subject matter lending itself to an interpretation in terms of Saakta are two different things.

Be that as it may, the reader has a rewarding access to a lot of remote and recondite information. One can get to know the concepts of Mahaa Kaali, Mahaa Lakshmi, Mahaa Saraswati, Durga, Lalita, Kaamaakshi, Chandrabhushakriyaa Sakti, Kaameswari, Prabhaa, Ekaveeraa, Sita, Chandi, Visaalaakshi, Annapoorna, Yoga Maaya, Bhadra Kaali or Krishna, Vijaya, Kumuda, Kanyaka, Isaana, Kaatyaayani, Ashta Maatrikas, Kumaari, Baalaa, Somaapeedaa, Gangaa and Krodha Kaali, etc.

The work is a Doctoral thesis. While the work exudes the author's enormous acquaintance with the Tantra (which is generally referred to as Mantrasastra in the South) one cannot help feeling that more objectivity could have been brought to bear on the work, avoiding a lot of confusion and obfuscation

in the process. One is bewildered to read that “Pratyamgiraa Rik Paarayanakrama” is none other than “Vana Durgaa Mahaa Vidya Pancasati.” (page 227)

The author is to be congratulated for his effort. While it is good in parts, it bears better writing. The printing is atrociously bad.

DR. SALVA KRISHNAMURTHY

Adhunka Andhra Sahityamulo Chaitanya Sravanti (Stream of Consciousness in Modern Telugu Literature): By Y. Ramakrishna Rao. Publications Division, Vedika, 1-1-261/798, Chikkadapally, Hyderabad-20. Price: Rs. 40.

Krishna Sastry Krishnapaksham — Oka Pariseelana: By Meruva Venkateswara Rao. Visalandhra Publishing House, Vignan Bhavan, Bank Street, Hyderabad-500 001. Price: Rs. 10.

Kattamanchi Musalamma Maranam: By K. Damodara Reddy. Price: Rs. 10.

Vimarsakuniga Rallapalli: By V. Ramanjani Kumari. Price: Rs. 10.

Vachana Kavita: Aspashtata: By M. Ravindra Reddy. Price: Rs. 10.

Vachana Kavitalo Kavita Kavita: By G. Santhi. Price: Rs. 10.

All published by Navayuga Book Distributors, Sultan Bazar, Hyderabad-1.

Despite a conservative view that research in languages and humanities is an exercise in cutting and pasting, it has come to stay as a form of academic discipline — thanks to the incentives offered by the universities and overall academic awareness on the part of the countless graduates coming out of the portals of the academic citadels year after year. While it is always open to question as to what original thought has been contributed by the scholars at large, there is no denying that by dint of methodicity and organised work they are able to produce good, compact reference books on the subject of their choice. One cannot lose sight of the fact that once in a way a brilliant work makes its appearance on the scene. It is in this perspective that one has to view and evaluate the recent trends in research.

Ramakrishna Rao's thesis on Chaitanya Sravanti in Modern Telugu Literature is a thorough-going scholastic effort deep and wide at once. He examines with a penchant for detail the school of thought as propounded by James Joyce, traces its history in English literature and examines its ramifications in seven notable modern novels. He also discusses the school of thought in relation to surrealism, expressionism and existentialism. Numerous short stories and some poetic works also came under study with regard to the school of thought. Authentic exposition and clear thought conveyed in readable prose mark this treatise which should please the expert and layman.

Among the trend-setting poets of yesteryears Krishna Sastry is unique. Unsuccessful love, and resultant remorse, sensuous imagery, sweet lyricism and sublime thought have put him on the high pedestal of Bhavakavita (lyrical poetry). His discursive and lyrical essays, audio playlets done for A. I. R., film songs and enjoyable discourses have gone into the making of a totality of Krishna Sastry's literary legacy. M. Venkateswara Rao's book seeks to study "Krishnapaksham", the poet's *magnum opus*. Venkateswara Rao has admiration for his hero and involvement in the subject and so succeeds in bringing out a fine introduction to Krishna Sastry's poetry.

... ..

Kattamanchi Ramalinga Reddy was an apostle of modern literary criticism, a poet of no mean calibre, a prolific writer on a variety of subjects, an educationalist and a great son of Andhra. K. Damodara Reddy in this critical endeavour evaluates Kattamanchi's literary accumen with special reference to *Musalamma Maranam*, an epoch-making tragic poem in modern literature. A brief life sketch, the influence of East and West on his poetry, an impassioned review of the poem, his influence on the contemporary literary scene, a collection of credible opinions on Kattamanchi form the content of the book with a journalistic approach and facile prose.

... ..

Rallapalli Anantakrishna Sarma a versatile and integrated genius is a force to reckon with in the annals of Telugu culture. He occupies a place of pride as a great critic who has held high the flag of Indian aesthetics, a scholar of rare merit, a musician and above all an introvert with spiritual moorings. Following the archetypal plan of most of the dissertation V. Ramanjani Kumari gives a life sketch, Telugu criticism prior to and after Rallapalli, a brief review of his works (*Natakopanyasamulu*, *Saraswatopanyasamulu* and *Vemana*, to name a few) and evaluates his total personality, thus paying a well-deserved tribute to the multi-faceted genius of Rallapalli in an impassioned manner.

Obscurity, ambiguity, vagueness — though not synonymous — indicate that which is not clear and above comprehension and in the context of literary criticism it suggests that the poet's thought is beyond the plane of the reader's comprehension. While some critics have extolled the virtue of vagueness in poetry, some have flayed it to the possible extent. Lot of critical effort has already been put in this regard, especially in English poetic studies. Ravindra Reddy interprets vagueness in respect of

verse-libre in modern Telugu literature. The main chapters deal with the origin and growth of vagueness, the origin and their interaction. Organised academic research, and objective conclusions mark the research work dealing with a new subject, eminently readable.

... ..
 G. Santhi takes up the study of free verse in Telugu in respect of its definition of poetry, "Poetry as a subject in poetry" as she succinctly puts it. While giving the reader various definitions of the individual poets of the genre she traces the evolution of the free verse in the context of various political movements in Andhra. Thus Abhyudaya, Digambara and Viplava schools of poetry are analysed. A similar effort is done in old Romanticist and other schools of poetry to provide the necessary background for the study. The dissertation culminates in establishing the interaction of the poet with contemporary trends in a well-documented manner.

DR. D. RAMANATHA SASTRI

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INDIVISIBLE HERITAGE OF INDIAN LITERATURE

Tribute to Prof. V. K. Gokak

Sri P. V. NARASIMHA RAO

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

I am privileged to be in your midst to honour Professor Vinayak Krishna Gokak. The Jnanpith Award that has been conferred upon him, the words of admiration that have been showered, are of course a recognition of his outstanding contribution to Indian literature but they also betoken more. They are an offering of our gratitude to an eminent thinker, a distinguished poet and writer, one who has not only enriched the literature but also greatly enriched our lives. We are proud of him as Indian because he is one of us. We are proud of him because he belongs to the human family. We are filled with wonderment and pride at the depth of his thought and the sensitivity of his expression because they prove the point that being the outpouring of the individual, does not belong to him alone ; it belongs to all humankind.

Professor Gokak's writings reflect an imagination which knows no confines and are yet deeply contemplative of the existing reality and the truth which lies beyond. His works speak in an idiom which is surging and vibrant and yet also full of lyricism and gentleness. They reflect a mind which can encompass the vast sweep of history, the Odyssey of human progress and also go deeply into the finest of fine nuances of emotions. They reflect a mind which can be engrossed in day-to-day human existence and yet be as deeply engrossed in the search for the eternal truth. In over six decades, beginning from his lyrical composition "Kalopasaka", published in 1934, Professor Gokak has covered almost all fields of literary expression—poetry, novel, play and contemplative prose. He has, through these long years, reached out to subjects, thoughts and forms which make for great literature. On a personal plane,

I recall that I became aware of his scholarly presence in 1939 when I joined the Fergusson College, Pune.

Literature has a special place in our lives. It is our faithful companion in the quest for a more meaningful, more purposeful life. It brings to us the experience which everyone may not have had, and yet which is extremely important for one's inner development and growth, for evolving into a more complete individual and a better one. It is a nursery for the full flowering of the human spirit and personality. It nurtures all that is humane. It keeps alive the will to strive for the better, for the higher. The role of literature has always been of great importance but is of particular relevance today, at a time when scientific development has opened new vistas of progress, and technological and economic changes have also deeply affected social mores and relationships.

The protective cover of the family and the cohesive ties of the society are becoming increasingly nebulous, without anything comparably reassuring and warm taking their place. The individual is more lonely today than ever before, and more vulnerable. And more confused. He is in a state of anomie, lacking a sense of purpose. He is in danger of wandering into a situation where he becomes oblivious of the larger purposes of life. He is engaged only in the fulfilment of his material wants. This, by itself is normal, but it tends to become the sole obsession through a daunting process of competition and conflict. What worsens the struggle is the compulsive trend to judge one's lot not on its own merit, but always in relation to the other fellow's. The impact of this perpetual rat race could perhaps be mitigated by literature which inculcates detachment through identification with persons and situations created by the writer.

The literature of Professor Gokak has at its core the vision of *samanvaya*, harmony. Whether it is in the coming together of the literary traditions of the East and the West; whether it is antiquity or the modern predicament; whether it is situations and emotions which are as seemingly antithetical as they are varied — different streams and strands interact in the writings of Professor Gokak and the vision of life that emerges is more complete, closer to the truth. The high point of this spirit of *samanvaya* is reached in his *magnum opus* "Bharata Sindhu Rashmi."

This *samanvaya*, however, has not come easily or quickly. I am sure he will testify to this. Behind it there has been

a long lifetime of agonising reflection. This is evident from the following passage from the "Rashmi."

"Generations have churned the ocean of Time and received wondrous gifts. O, our misfortune! For us, the churning has provoked poison. Flames have enveloped the world and nowhere is visible the blue-throated poison-drinking god, the Neelakantha. Pigmy nations are crossing swords with giants and nowhere is a saviour visible. Pretenders to wisdom, attracted to the thralldom of the senses, collect a palmful of seafoam and drink salt water, deeming it nectar. There are star-lovers who, ignoring the Polar Star, are thrilled by meteors and comets. Immersed in the study of the minutiae of yogic lore there are seekers who forget that their search is for Truth. They are lost in a maze unable to recognise the supreme simplicity of Truth. The plodders doing their mechanical tasks have poisoned our meat and drink and our daily living. Our leaders uphold the flag of one religion, race, class, caste, or the other. They are perfect poison-mongers. (That is the description of some of us.) The philosophy of the seven sunbeams co-ordinates and reconciles contraries. It is an antidote to Dithi's conspiracy of division and conflict. Hence this epic, the lustrous essence of the lives of great seers, illuminers of mind and harbingers of harmony. The layman and the scholar will both thrill to it."

Phenomenal Imagination

This is the agonising conflict which has brought out this epic. I have had very little time -- literally a part of one half-wakeful night -- to read a bit of the very inadequate English paraphrase of "Bharata Sindhu Rashmi." It would be unfair for me to make any comment based on this very brief reading. But the theme reminded me of Jai Sankar Prasad's "Kamayani". After a long time, I lost myself in the Vedic world. I felt that "Rashmi" deals with the wider and more complex matrix of interaction and integration. It brings out the fascinating story of building of a nation, through blood, love, life-style. The building blocks are from the Rig Veda. They are not too many, but the poet's phenomenal imagination makes every word of the epic appear to emanate from Vedic lore. The sweep is indeed breathtaking.

Like all other epics, "Rashmi" contains numerous facets--you know, it doesn't have all the unities that are prescribed in literature, nor Ramayana has it, nor Mahabharata has it, we cannot expect a work like Rashmi to contain it--and they are not necessarily inter-connected, yet, making up a whole

that is greater than the sum total of its parts. Each facet, however, has its own charm — and truth. I was struck, for instance, by the following passage :

“ He ventured again on another topic. Religions are in conflict with each other. Why not cultivate a universal religion and eliminate all conflicts ? ” Viswamitra said :

“ Unity lies, not in religions, but in the spiritual outlook. You would like to be my master and teach me the universal religion...My own inner insight is my master in spirit. The only Guru I have is God Himself.”

How contemporary all these sound although it was Vishwamitra who spoke those words !

And yet, the poet—rather the seer in the poet—has not lost hope. He says :

Declared has the Supreme :
Man shall come round serenely in the end.
His own misdeeds will humble him with stumbling.
In his own error are involved the steps.
That help him to evolve towards the Throne.
And sit, one day, anointed near the High.
Man was born God-like, innocent and pure.
And he knew beauty day by day through Sense.
But friends allured him with the Golden Deer.
Enslaved his kind with the spell of Name and Form
And foothold gave in their dominion.
To save man from this plight, I, the Supreme,
Breathed Sacrifice into his daily life.
And built the fire-altar. But ignorance.
Mantra turned to magic. Word to words.
In a world marbled with ingratitude.
O, I came down in clay. I showered love.
The Avatar is here ! some cried.

This, even as an English rendering — what it could be in the original you can imagine — is really something great, something which touches every heart.

POETIC SCORN

He also pours a bit of poetic scorn on the *dramatis personae* of contemporary life, their follies and their foibles :

It was great fun. I watched it for a while.
In an infinite Zero the Nihilist lost his way.
Philosophers called me a hermaphrodite,

*Feminists — woman and others a neuter noun.
 Each capped me his own way till all were trapped.
 The Materialist's prow both day and night
 For golden particles glistening in sand :
 With aching sense, the Epicurean's search
 Only for crumbs in Life's most gorgeous banquet :
 The Man of Reason and the Socialist
 Pleased with a little when life gifts the whole :
 All these revealed the intermediate darkness
 With which the ego eclipses, day or night
 The plangent journeys of the planetary soul,
 Many worship the Manifold, not the One.
 They strike for unity, forgetting the Supreme.
 Integral living remains a broken image.
 When they move through the world, or tribes
 through jungles :
 It does not tingle, mingle in their blood.*

AGE-OLD THEME

However, having said all this, I must add that like all other epics, "Rashmi" also deals with the age-old theme of good and evil. Commentators have noted, rightly, that it depicts the ultimate triumph of good over evil. How "ultimate" is the triumph. If it is in the long run, how long is the run? Or is it mere wishful thinking? If in the short run Evil is seen as triumphant, at least those who are impatient surely are justified in adopting Evil. Aren't they? How does one meet this logic of the impatient? And if this is a world of velocity, where instantaneity is the name of the game, who would prefer to wait until the ultimate long run triumph of the Good? These are the questions for poets, philosophers and social engineers to answer.

Meanwhile, everyone admires and adores the epic and the epic-maker Gokak.

*(Condensed version of the speech of Sri P. V. NARASIMHA RAO
 on the presentation of the Gnanpith Award to Prof. V. K. GOKAK,
 on November, 1, 1991, at Bombay)*

THE AUTHORITY

HARSHDEV MADHAV

The taste of sweet fruit
of Eden Garden is mixed
in the authority.

Like Shurpanakha
The authority is also devilish.

The authority like Female - Snake
Falls like the lightning
gives blows like whip
creates disaster like witch
touches like poisonous - plant
eats like wolf

Bears evil creatures like crocodile
Fascinates like black magic.

The authority possesses
The evil sense of Ravana
The rules of Duryodhana
Fraud of Shakuni
Cruelty of Kamsa
Decisions of Othello
The end of King Richard III.

THE POET AS CITIZEN

PROF. V. K. GOKAK

I should like to speak on this memorable occasion and to this distinguished audience on the Poet as Citizen of 21st Century India. Before I do so, I should like to say how happy I am for having been selected for this honour. By the end of this year, we will be only nine years away from that challenging and baffling period. Its waters are already in our midst imperceptibly, the 20th century having split into many branches, like a river, all of them winding their way to the sea. How will the branches fare in the turbulent waters of the 21st century? Will the poet survive this change?

The old pronouncement is already there, sounding pontifical—"As civilisation advances, poetry declines." It comes from Macaulay, that blundering pundit and prophet of New India, who indulged in half-truths believing in them as if they were whole. T. L. Peacock in his "The Four Ages of Poetry," a contemporary of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley and Keats, some of whom he satirised in his 'Nightmare Abbey,' speaks of Homer's Age (or of Valmiki's and Vyasa's) as the Golden Age of Poetry, of Virgil's Age (or of Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti) as the Silver Age of Poetry, of the Age of succeeding poets or the Third Age as the Brass Age and the Fourth Age as the Iron Age of Poetry to which we ourselves and our own poets, who are nothing more than iron filings, belong. The ominous suggestion is that poetry will be ironed out of existence in the push-button era of today or the electronic era of tomorrow. Man will be a computerised man, a robot, or a piece of computerised manipulation.

These are chilling, even killing, thoughts and we can pass on to others. It is true that science has taken tremendous leaps in the philosophy of science and in technology. Physics has reached the wonder level of Vedanta and technology has gone far beyond the magic weapons mentioned in the Vedas, the Puranas and in ancient epics. In fact it seems as though man

can be assembled now like a machine with the help of artificial limbs and other parts of the body. In a poem that I wrote in 1959, I said :

“Let us not breathe with iron lungs,
 Eat with robot hands,
 See with dead men's eyes,
 Think with electronic brains,
 And feel with an engrafted double heart,
 Let us not split the atom,
 Only to split mankind,
 Let us not burn incense
 In the path of a jet,
 Or rocket,
 And forget the horizon,
 That lifts as we arrive.”

Undoubtedly, Europe's scientific and industrial advancement is breath-taking and so is its economic and social organisation. The European Common Market is a symbol of Europe's fast coming together in one field. In comparison, the third world, of which we and our country are a part, presents a pathetic picture with its primitive sections of a fast-multiplying society, an emergent anaemic middle class and the “New Rich” who are out to exploit their people for their own dubious ends. If there are dreamers in the third world, as there would be, they are bound to end their days in Sanyas or Faqiri and the leaders of society have rarely the moral strength or idealistic fervour to lead it.

But no part of the world is free from its problems and perplexities. If one part of the world suffers from too little money, another suffers from too much. The western world is in the grip of three evils today—weed, woman and wine. Whether it is the first, second or third world on this earth of ours, it needs its poet, playwright, novelist or film-writer to be its friend, philosopher and guide to lead him out of evil and into the region of good.

Of the form and substance of poetry, form changes from epoch to epoch. Poetic substance also changes but not so rapidly. In his transition from the ancient and medieval to the modern world, the modern Indian poet underwent a sea-change in form. He has moved away from literary forms like ‘Chamu’ and prosodic forms like ‘Vritta’ and ‘Shatpadi’ and uses forms borrowed from the West like the novel, travelogue, autobiography and the diary and uses other forms like the epic

and the lyric modifying them in some ways. Language itself has changed and he has developed new rhythms, metres and styles so that modern Indian writing wears a new revolutionary look. The air is expectant now and a little apprehensive what changes might come and upset the apple-cart of poetry.

The other key-words which might be favoured in the coming century may be anticipated to be intuitive, sensitive and expressive. The intellectual element in poetry may be reduced more and more and discursiveness or easy expansion of meaning may get replaced in poetry a little and intensive perception may get more pointedness and emphasis because it is closer to the essence of poetry. Poetry may become more and more brief and telling at the same time. It is possible that the narrative and descriptive elements in poetry which tend to be a little excessive, will gradually get separated from the seeing (pashyanti) function of poetry and be absorbed by television itself in its serial recurrence, its vivid presentation of details and its epigrammatic summation of the argument. Imagery can be actually made visible on the screen instead of narrative may be presented generally on the screen instead of being described in words. The epic dimensions of narrative may be presented generally on the screen instead of being set forth in page after page for reading. A drama may be assimilated completely in television. The dramatic, narrative and contemplative processes as parts of literature may be converted into arts both of the eye and the ear instead of being meant only for the eye. Time is of the essence of the matter, however fantastic it might sound now. If the poet and his public have begun to feel that a rearrangement of the elements of poetry is necessary in the given pattern for saving time and for falling in line with the new lifestyle of an advanced era, the rearrangement will assert itself, no matter at what cost.

Apart from intuitive perception, what are the other parts of the poet's experience? The poet's consciousness is like a sensitive plant. It is a touch-me-not and it has in it a sensitivity which penetrates in a subtle way whatever the scenes, sights, objects or persons that it comes into contact with. It does not identify itself with them, like intuitive perception, but allows them to touch its very core. One remembers in this context the experience conveyed by "Hungry Stones", one of Tagore's short stories. It is the hint of a supernatural experience that haunts Tagore's character in the short story. He spent a night in a building which had rich associations with history, sensing eerie presences there insistently. But he was unable

to locate them and identify them. Similarly, one remembers lines like these from W. B. Yeats' early poetry.

"The cry of a child by the roadway
The creak of lumbering cart
Are wronging the image that blossoms
A rose, in the deeps of my heart."

In fact, sensitiveness, this other part of the poet's personality, may be identified with what Herbert Read calls the common denominator of our sentiments and emotions, the dynamic and changing part of our being as distinguished from character, which is fixed and stable.

The third word which we have been considering for describing poetry, along with 'intuitive' and 'sensitive' is 'expressive' meaning significant or serving to express. It is that power over words which helps the poet to recreate the object as an enduring image or symbol that enables the poet to see the intuition and sensitiveness and hear them through his magic and music of words. It may be that the 21st century will not insist on any rearrangement of the elements of poetry, without compelling poets to adjust themselves to altered modes and designs. Or it may call for a reintegration. But what is certain is that intuition, sensitiveness and expressiveness inhere in the poet. They are an enduring part of his personality. When no language had developed as yet, primitive man, the one with a poetic temperament, began with the language of gestures. It is said that a master with the highest culture speaks through silence to his pupil and gives him the purest delight. The gold of silence may prevail in such moments for speech is only silver.

It is not as though the poet has a monopoly of intuition. The scientist and the philosopher draw upon it and the mystic uses it even more frequently and elaborately. The characteristic gift of the scientist is observation, that of the philosopher is discrimination. Vision is the gift of poet. The gift of mystics is the awakened and evolving consciousness. Intuition at the highest level as in Newton and Einstein, occurs in the midst of their observation. As in Shankara, Schelling and Kant, it flashes in inspired moments in the midst of their discrimination. As in Dante's 'The Divine Comedy' and in Sri Aurobindo's 'Savitri' poets who developed into perfect mystics, vision or intuition pervades the writing, at the summit of the evolved consciousness or climbing towards it in the intermediate zones of Reality. Intuition helps the scientist to arrive at Truth,

the poet at Beauty, the philosopher at Philosophic Truth, and the mystic at Reality from the base to the summit.

There are four types of Knowers or Seekers that have been identified so far, the poet, the scientist, the philosopher and the mystic. If we try to understand their genius at the highest level, we get into the nexus of their experience—their creative perfection of Beauty, Truth, Philosophic Truth and Reality.

A fifth type of 'Knower' or 'Seeker' may have to be reckoned with because there is a higher type of seeker or knower than the mystic or sage poet, — the Rigvedic seer or Jesus Christ of the New Testament of the Bible. They scatter cosmic truths as they go along, their utterances being seeds of new philosophies of being or new codes of enlightened behaviour. They do not care to develop them into new systems of thought or behaviour, like Dante or Sri Aurobindo. Their utterances are rounded and complete in themselves and casual as it were and need to be expanded in some directions for elucidation. These may be called prophets or revealers of God's will if we like.

The prophet and the sage poet are makers of society. They come when a new world order is to arise and their life becomes the saga of a new world. They are not the products of centuries. The centuries themselves are the products of these prophets and mystics.

When we think of poets that as citizens, we think of the great tribe of poets that amuse, tickle, entertain, delight, instruct, enlighten or illumine us. Their durability or significance for the public lies in the measure or number of their intuitive gleams which they use for their chosen function.

There arises out of this tribe of poets, the sage-poet we have already spoken of. There is also another who is the twin companion of the sage-poet — the one whose brain is like a ball of light emitting subtle gleams all round. He impresses us as if he were the indweller of a starlit dome. Indra or Jupiter who is all eyes, having eyes all over the body, even on the palms of his hand and feet. He is the omniscient beholder and interpreter. Nothing escapes him. He sees with great dispassion in an intense gaze and sparks off its essence in a moment, be it a flower, a lovely face, ugliness itself, a villain or a hero. Who shall we mention as the poet of this starlit dome, who but Shakespeare? His brain sparkles with the electricity of spirit, emitting gleams from

every point on its surface. There is no twist or turn of character that he has not portrayed for all time and no giant leap or towering sweep or personality that he has not captured for ever in words. He is the Mahendra of poets, a companion of Vyasa, Valmiki and Dante, who embodied doctrine alongside of personality and made both living.

In any phase of human evolution, whatever the ethos of century and its love of experiment, the poet fulfils the mission for which he is born, just as the scientist, the philosopher or the mystic does. The form and outward fashion may change. But the electromagnetic spirit of poetry will persist for millennia even when the evolution of a higher world order and the advent of newer and rarer types of human personality are in evidence.

I feel very happy that I have been able to write "Bharata Sindhu Rashmi", the epic of which sage Vishvamitra is the central hero. In the two ancient epics, the 'Ramayana' and the 'Mahabharata', we do not get the thrill of his magnetic, magnanimous and complex personality. It is the Rigveda that does full justice to his many-sided greatness. He was a poet, king, warrior, sage, a leader of men that transformed a small and divided kingdom like Sapta Sindhu into a 'great Rashtra' like Bharatavarsha with its own synthetic Arya - Dravidian culture and religion. He was one of the central figures of the Vedic Renaissance who poured new life into national moulds of thought, feeling and living.

After a hundred years of dedicated living, when sage Vishvamitra was resting, feeling that his mission was accomplished, there came to see him three cosmic beings — Mother Earth Swayam-bhuva, the Adam of the human race and Time, the incarnate old gipsy man. Time's prayer was ;

" Sage! in me a giant's strength reposes.

The intense drama of the birth and doom of the worlds.

How it all ends, only the maker knows.

Unfold to me the polar mysteries —

Man's destination and earth's destiny".

Time was perplexed and asked a burning question that was facing him each moment — the meaning of life and the future of all the worlds.

" Compassionate, the sage

Opened his lips from where he lay on the couch.

Smiling....

What reply — sage Vishvamitra gave to Time, I had better leave unsaid, because otherwise, I might detain you too long.

Before I close this speech, I have to do a duty. I have no wish to parade the names of my masters. But I must publicly acknowledge the inspiration and guidance over the years that Sri Aurobindo, the Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Bhagavan Sri Satya Sai Baba of Prasanthi Nilayam gave me in doing my literary work which is before the public.

Jai Hind !

(Text of the Jnanpith Award winner Prof. Gokak's acceptance speech delivered on Nov. 1, 1991)

I RAN ALONG THE RIVER

R. T. DESHPANDE

I ran along the river
Singing the song of many streams —
Sometimes golden in their moods,
Sometimes looking back at the hill
Where awoke the first dreams
Calling the birds of the bright valley
To give wings to bodiless trance,
Under the calm of the moon's silver,
Or in meadows where no thought intrudes,
They seemed with hourlessness my joys to fill.

I ran along the river
Until my shadows I could no more see ;
South-eastward rushing through the day,
And even by the thickening night
When no star poured his delight
Bringing from the name of the sky
To me the blue of the far-away.
I reached the Invisible's sea.

Dr. VINAYAK KRISHNA GOKAK
A Triple First in the Culture of Literature
Dr. D. ANJANEYULU

[Professor Gokak was long associated with the *Triveni* quarterly, first as a valued contributor and later as a member of the Advisory Board till the time of his death on 28th April, 1992. — EDITOR]

Among the Indian intelligentsia, educated in English, there are some who have a flair for the English language; others who are good in their own native languages. Some who have a talent for teaching and speaking, others who have the gift of writing. Among those with a gift of the gab, there are some who are able to make a mark as professors. Out of them, only a few are able to achieve success as educational administrators. It is only a very limited few who are able to manage that, without losing the talent for teaching and love of learning or the gift of writing.

Among those limited and lucky few was the late Professor Vinayak Krishna Gokak, who played many roles in his life of action and achievement. He was a teacher, university professor, vice-chancellor, writer, poet, critic, essayist, mystic, philosopher, scholar and savant and many other things besides. Of him it could justly be said that he touched nothing that he did not adorn. He was versatile without being a dilettantist, wide-ranging without being superficial. He always had a sense of purpose in everything that he undertook. He was ambitious without being a careerist or an opportunist. He occupied quite a few responsible positions, as they came to him because of his intellectual equipment, professional expertise and general experience.

Vinayak Krishna Gokak, who died on 28 April, 1992 (full of years and honours) was born on 9 August, 1909. Born into a family of lawyers, he chose to take the teaching line for

his career. After taking his M. A. degree in English with distinction from Bombay University in 1931, he had a stint of teaching, before going up to Oxford, where he took his M. A. with a first class in 1938.

Gokak's teaching career was a story of continuous ascent, with a climb through ascending spirals to dizzy heights. Starting as an Assistant Professor of English at the Fergusson College in Poona (1931 - 1936), he proceeded to Willingdon College, Sangli, as Professor (1938 - 40), becoming its Principal (1940 - 44).

The rest was again a story of brilliant success after success — Professor of English, Osmania University (1945 - 46); Principal, M. N. College, Visanagar (1946 - 49); of Rajaram College, Kolhapur (1949 - 52). of Karnataka College, Dharwar (1952-59). This was followed by a series of administrative assignments — not unconnected with his academic career—Director, Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad (1959-66); Vice-Chancellor, Bangalore University (1966-69); Director, Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Simla (1970 - 71); and Vice-Chancellor, Sri Satya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, for a few years from 1981.

In the meantime, he was appointed Chairman of the Official Language Committee by the Karnataka Government, during the Chief Ministership of R. Gundu Rao. The report submitted by him in that capacity on the place of Kannada and English became the subject of bitter controversy among educationists, politicians, publicists and others. While he managed to remain in the good books of the Government, he could not retain the admiration and goodwill of intellectuals with no axe to grind.

As in the case of teaching so in that of writing, Gokak started his career quite early in life. His first collection of poems, *Kalopaasaka*, published in 1934, became an instant trail-blazer in Kannada poetry. He became a trend-setter, a herald of change, marking a departure from the Sanskritised classical tradition to the lyrical, evocative mysticism and the simple direct expression of modern romantic poetry. This won him speedy recognition, as could be seen in his being invited to preside over the Kavigoshti of the Kannada Sahitya Parishad at Raichur.

His next publication was titled *Samudra Geetaganu* (Songs of the Sea), a long poem, he started composing on board a ship during his journey to England in 1936. He was fond of describing it as "the most spontaneous work" of his life. It was also welcomed by the literary world of the day for

its inherent beauty, refreshing simplicity and unconventional style. The new trend was indicated in his own introduction, in which he said :

“ In unfetterd words,
In the rhythm of the dancing waves.
I write these lines,
Scorn me not for that, for
Who can arrest the sea in its wildness ? ”

Published in 1942, this collection of verses had an abiding influence on the younger generation of Kannada poets. Gokak himself looked up to an older generation of romantic lyricists, like D. R. Bendre, but he proceeded further and broke new ground. A sensitive student of English poetry, Gokak was not immune to the revolution in poetic credo and composition, set in motion by great English poets like W. B. Yeats and T. S. Eliot. On his own too, he was not unaware of the predicament of modern man, which was alienation, be it real, modish or imagined. His unequivocal ideas on this problem are vividly presented in his book *Indilla, Nale* (If not today, then tomorrow). Here he turns the searchlight on the erosion of human values under the impact of technological advance and industrial development. It was time that India heeded the lesson from the experience of more “ Developed Countries,” as they were called.

Man has begun to fly in the rocket and in the space satellite and have a glance at the earth from that perch. But the poet has his own perceptions through his imagination. In *Ilagita* the poet soars into the sky to have a look at the earth. In *Neerada* he keeps his feet on the ground and gives us a symbolic picture of the clouds, as viewed from down below. A combination of these two took the shape of *Divya Prithvi*, an epic, comprising over thirty thousand lines, written in 1957, for which Gokak was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Prize for 1960.

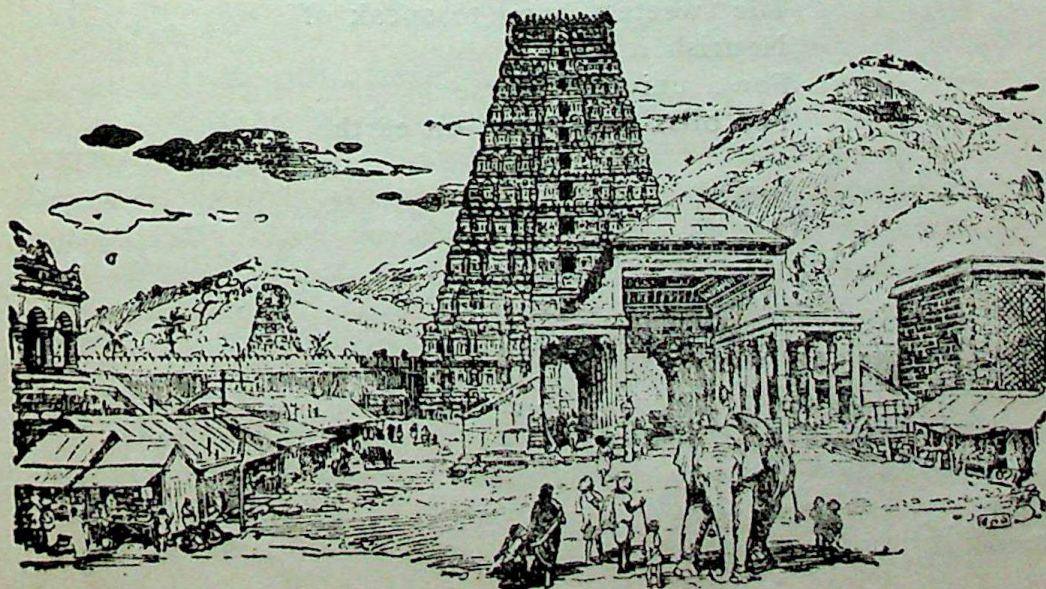
As a poet, Gokak never looked back. While his *Kashmira* revealed traces of the influence of modern English poets, like Eliot and Auden, according to some critics, *Akasha Ganga* and *Balade Gula* are seen to reflect his epic vision in a more indigenous setting.

The crowning glory of Gokak's poetic achievement was, however, to be found in *Bharata Sindhu Rashmi*, an epic of thirty-five thousand lines in blank verse, which won him the Jnanpith Award in 1990. It reflects the poet's grand vision of life and literature.

Gokak tried his expert hand in other genres of writing as well, though not with equal success, in terms of public recognition. His plays, *Jananayaka*, *Vimarshaka Vaidya* and *Munidamaari*, all experimental, did not earn the recognition they deserved.

Gokak had also a number of original works, in English, to his credit. They include: *The Song of Life* (1948), *In Life's Temple* (1966) both in verse; *Narahari — Prophet of New India* (1972) novel; *The Concept of Indian Literature*, and *Integral View of Poetry*, both criticism; and *A Golden Treasury of Indian Poetry in English*. The last is a representative selection of English poetry by Indian writers from Michael Madhusudan Dutt and Toru Dutt to Nissim Ezekiel and P. Lal. A deep lover of Kannada poetry, he was a sensitive and sympathetic student of English poetry as well.

Not surprising that Gokak was elected Vice-President, and later President, of Sahitya Akademi. He had a balanced and integrated view of literature, as a whole. He was able to appreciate the wealth and variety of Indian literature, with so many streams entering it, to enrich its waters. The Sahitya Akademi which is the National Academy of Letters, to quote his own words, "is not merely concerned with a few distinguished writers. Less known writers, scattered over the length and breadth of the nation, are equally important to it." Gokak was not unaware of Indian literature's debt to Western thought and English and other foreign literatures. But they had to be properly assimilated to become an integral whole. His own precept and example were a brilliant illustration of this process of unseen alchemy.



HOME, HOME, SWEET HOME

MADHUSUDAN NAYAK

Home home
Sweet home
Make it sweeter
If you can.
Not by gold
Nor by laws
But by love
If you can.

Here is your father
Here is your mother
The adored god and goddess on earth
Revere them all
For a happy home
The fairest creation on this planet.

Here is your brother
Here is your sister
The sweetest bond to speak of
Nourish it well
For a universal home
For bliss and peace on earth.

SOME PROBLEMS FOR CRITICISM IN "MACBETH"

Prof. N. KAILASAM

When did Macbeth first Entertain the Idea of Killing Duncan?

A careful reader of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* will understand that the hero had entertained the idea of killing Duncan and seizing the throne even before his meeting with the witches. But when did he actually entertain the idea for the first time?

Evidently it must have been during a point of time not covered by the play; that is, it must have taken place during a time prior to the commencement of action of the play. When the witches greet Macbeth as "Macbeth that shall be king hereafter", he trembles and Banquo draws pointed attention to that with his, "Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear things that do sound so fair?" This is the first hint we have of his guilty conscience. Then, soon after the receipt of the message that he had been made Thane of Cawdor, in his "aside" Macbeth makes two confessions. He says:

This supernatural soliciting
cannot be ill, cannot be good; if ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth? I am Thane of Cawdor?
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair?" and
"My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man."

That is, there was an evil suggestion in his heart to which he had already fallen a victim and even when that (the idea of murdering the king) was only in the imaginative state his entire body shook and his heart throbbed vigorously against his ribs.

Later when he tells his wife not to taunt him too much with the charge of cowardice and that he had courage enough to do whatever would become a man, she cuts him short with :

“What beast was it then,

That made you *break this enterprise to me* ?”

This again reveals that it was he who first made the suggestion, to kill the king, to her. Therefore, Macbeth had not only entertained the idea of killing the king and seizing the throne, but had also communicated this to his wife. The lady also pointedly says that when he first made that suggestion, neither time nor place had been favourable and when they had both made themselves favourable with the unexpected arrival of the king at their castle, he seemed to back out. So, when did he first think of such a plan? When did he break that plan to her?

There is no decisive hint in the play with regard to these. But there is no harm in thinking on these lines. The idea of killing Duncan and taking possession of the kingdom came to Macbeth in the midst of his individual combat with the king of Norway. Let us examine Ross's description of that battle.

“Norway himself

With terrible numbers,

Assisted by that most disloyal traitor

The Thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict ;

Till that Bellone's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,

Confronted him with self-comparisons,

Point against point, rebellious arm against arm,

Curbing his lavish spirit.”

It was the feeling that he was more than a match to a king and the aged Duncan was utterly dependent on him, that made Macbeth entertain that idea.

Even though this description of the battle appears in the play after the first appearance of the witches, this battle takes place before their appearance and they at once decide to greet him with tempting prophecies.

Then, when did he communicate this idea to his wife? We find that between his meeting with the witches and that with the king, Macbeth had managed to write a letter to his wife. It is with this letter in hand that she makes her first appearance in the play. Can't we suppose that he had written to her another letter even earlier, immediately after his victory? It is only natural for a husband like Macbeth to inform his wife of the outcome of the battle through a personal messenger. In that

letter he could have broached the idea. In fact, when the two meet for the first time in the play, we find her telling him "Thy letters have transported me beyond this ignorant present", thereby indicating that he had written to her more than one letter. It is even possible that he had hinted it in the first part of the letter. Lady Macbeth is seen reading, as she reads aloud only its last part.

But it is better to suppose that (1) The first idea of killing Duncan came to Macbeth during the triumphant moments of his individual combat with the king of Norway and the witches knew of it at once and decided to tempt him and (2) Immediately after the battle and before the meeting with the witches, Macbeth wrote his first letter to his wife. This alone would account for the way he starts and shivers when the witches make the prophecy regarding his becoming a king. A mere vague idea that had just passed through his mind during the battle cannot justify this starting and shivering. And, of course, when the second prophecy of the witches came to be fulfilled in minutes, Macbeth could not but write his second letter to his wife, in the context of what he had written in his earlier letter.

"He has no Children"

It has been universally conceded that these words of Macduff are capable of three interpretations. Of these, the most widely accepted one is to take the word "he" in the passage as referring to the young Malcom who had so lightly dismissed Macduff's deep sorrow over the death of his wife and children and asked him to convert the same into a spirit of revenge. In that case Macduff's words would mean that if Malcom had been a father he would not have dismissed his sorrow so lightly. The other two interpretations are based on the assumption that Macbeth had no children. But are we justified in taking that for granted?

In the scene that opens with Macbeth's "If it's done when it's done" soliloquy, we find Lady Macbeth telling:

"I have given suck, and know how tender it is to love the babe that milks me", which shows that she was a mother. But critics usually take this as a reference to the fact that the historical Lady Macbeth had a child by a former husband. But Shakespeare has made some very daring departures from his sources in this play and we need not suppose that he would have stuck to them in this unimportant detail. Further, Shakespeare would not have given us a passage in a tense scene the

key for the understanding of which lies in some other book. Thirdly, it was most unlikely that the lady would have introduced a reference here to a child by a former husband at a time when she was asking Macbeth, in the name of his love to her, to kill the king. Even otherwise, we are to interpret the play only within the two covers of the text and the question regarding Shakespeare's adherence to or departure from Holinshed and others is purely of academic interest.

Then, do we have more direct references in the play to the fact that Macbeth had children? In Banquo's soliloquy which begins, "Thou hast it now", we find him telling:

"Thou hast it now, king, Cawdor, Glamis, all
As the weird women promised: and I fear
Thou play'dst most foully for it; yet it was said
It should not stand in thy posterity... .."

If Macbeth had no children, there would have been no occasion for these words. Further, in the soliloquy that begins with "To be thus is nothing," Macbeth refers to the prophecy of the witches regarding Banquo and says:

"They hailed him father to a line of kings.
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding."

These words clearly show Macbeth had children. If he had no children, he would not have bothered about the prophecy regarding Banquo's children as, anyway, the crown would have had to pass to some one else, on his death.

The introduction of Macbeth's child or children on the stage would have created an interest alien to the main spirit of the play. The same would have been the case if the child referred to in "I have given suck", had been Lady Macbeth's. In "Antony and Cleopatra", reference has been made to Cleopatra's children, including the one she had by Julius Caesar. But they do not appear on the stage. In Bernard Shaw's "Candida", again, there is a reference to children who do not appear on the stage.

Apart from this, I fear the full significance of the passage
"I have given suck, and know
How tender it is to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face, have

plucked my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dashed the brains out had I so sworn as you
have done to this"

has not been realised at all. Some have taken it to mean that the lady was more murderous than they had expected her to be. But the implied comparison is this. The first suggestion that the king might be murdered had come from Macbeth and it had acted very much like a sperm and in the mind of Lady Macbeth it had been "conceived" into a plan which she had later "delivered" to her husband. That is, this idea had become the pet child of her imagination and had captured her fancy as much as the child she had given suck to as a mother. She would sooner allow her real child's brain to be dashed out than have this pet child abandoned at that stage. As such the passage only shows the extent to which the idea of killing the king and seizing the throne had captured the lady's imagination.

Who was the Third Murderer in the play?

In the first scene of the third act of the play, we see Macbeth engaging two men for killing Banquo Fleance. But in the third scene of the same act wherein Banquo is murdered we find three men.

Who was the third man?

Some people have suggested that it was Macbeth himself, while a few others have said that it could be Ross. Both these ideas are so far-fetched and fantastic that it is not proposed to examine them at all here.

Dr. Johnson thought that the lines

"Within this hour, at most,

I will advise you where to plant yourselves,

Acquaint you with the perfect spy of the time.

The moment on it,"

contain the clue to the presence of the third murderer and he was none other than the perfect spy mentioned by Macbeth earlier. But there are difficulties in accepting this theory. The first two murderers are already on the spot when the third joins them and he does not at all seem to have gone there to tell them where to plant themselves. Further, those two people clearly appear surprised to see him and do not behave as though they had been expecting such a person. After all, Macbeth only meant that he would inform both those people, as a result of his close watch on Banquo's movements, where exactly they

had to stand and when. Therefore, when, in the third scene, the second fellow tells the first :

“He needs not our mistrust ; since he delivers
Our offices and what we have to do,
To the direction just,”

he only means that, by his exact knowledge of what they were to do he appeared to have been employed only by Macbeth and therefore he had not to be mistrusted. Hence Dr. Johnson's “Perfect spy theory” cannot be accepted. Can we think of any other way out of this problem ?

The soliloquy at the end of which Macbeth declares his determination to get rid of Banquo, begins in this way :

“To be thus is nothing ;
But to be safely thus : our fears in Banquo
Stick deep”

Almost at the same time, Lady Macbeth asks a servant whether Banquo was gone from court and on being told that he was, but he would be returning that night, she asks him to bring Macbeth. These things show that the “Banquo-problem” had been exercising her mind also and she wanted to have an exchange of views with her husband. The servant being gone, she tells herself :

“Nought's had, all's spent
Where our desire is got without content”

Which is the same as Macbeth's “To be thus is nothing, to be safely thus :” Then she goes on to say :

“Tis safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.”

Macbeth echoes this idea later when he says :

“Better be with the dead,
whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Then on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy.”

These parallel thought-processes show that the two people had been independently thinking of Banquo as an enemy whose death was absolutely essential to complete their happiness. Later, when Macbeth tells her :

“O ! full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife,
Thou know'st that Banquo and his Fleance lives”,
her reply is,

“But in them nature’s copy is not eterne”, that is, they were after all mortal. This is not just a statement that they would die one day or other and then these people could be happy. It emphatically tells that if these two people tried, Banquo and Fleance could be got rid of. Macbeth understands it as such and only then does he partially reveal his plans to her. When we see them again in the banquet scene, it is clear that he has fully confided in her. We must suppose that in the interim she suggested the sending of a third man to strengthen the first contingent of two as Banquo and Fleance made two people and Banquo was the greatest soldier of the realm after Macbeth; or unknown to Macbeth she sent the third man. Anyway, it is clear that Lady Macbeth had a hand in the wherefrom and why of the third murderer.

THE CAUSE UNSEEN

R. V. RAJESWARA RAO

Thine all-pervading glory
 Ah! How beyond me to express!
 How miraculously the cause of stars
 Thou dost ordain in the universe!
 The world animate and inanimate
 Is Thy manifestation, no doubt
 Of creation, preservation and destruction
 Thou art the “Cause Unseen.”
 Thou art the nameless and formless - spirit
 In the form of this world ever manifest
 To me, O Lord! Thou art all wonder mystery
 O! Let me know what Thou art in reality.

LURE OF KHAJURAHO

M. G. NARASIMHA MURTHY

'Khajuraho' — the magic word
Conjures up visions
Of ecstatic love
And rapturous union
Of amorous couples
And playful acts
Of enchanting grace —
Sculptures of rare elegance
On temple walls — a holy place !

Khajuraho, a cluster of shrines,
Sacred abodes
Of Vishnu and Mahadev,
A timeless legacy
Of Chandel kings
Of Bundelkhand,
And master craftsmen
Of rarest skill.

Ancient temples
That rise like hills
Spire upon spire —
Adorned with sculptures
Of dancing damsels
And alluring nymphs —
A curious blend
Of love and devotion
In the sublime realm
Of art and religion
Where the bloom of Youth
Never fades
And abiding Love
Transcends things mundane
And attains communion
With Spirit eternal
And Life divine !

CREATIVE ART AND YOGA-SADHANA

K. S. VENKATARAMANI

[K. S. Venkataramani was one of the distinguished contributors to "Triveni" right from the beginning. He was an established writer having about 20 books, in English, Tamil, Sanskrit and Hindi, to his credit. This article is reproduced from his book "The Nature of Creative Art" which was reprinted by the K. S. V. Birth Centenary Celebration Committee."- *Editor*]

What is Yoga? What is Sadhana?

Yoga is self-realisation or God-realisation; the union of the Jeevatma with Paramatma.

Sadhana is, in the words of one of the greatest saints and Advaitins of India, Swami Sivanandaji of Ananda Kutir, Rishikesh, "Sadhana is any practice to steady the wandering mind and fix it on God."

If the fundamental longings of the human mind on the higher level be the basis for the evaluation of all the true values of life and art, the only test then of all literature and life and creative art is that it must function and serve as Yoga-Sadhana. Self-expression both in thought and deed must be so attuned as to lead you to self-realisation, to the footstool of God.

One, with the attitude or bent of mind seeking devoutly this Yoga-Sadhana mode in the determination of his activities, is a Rasika. A Rasika is the only nursery from which sprouts both the Yogi and the creative artist. A true Rasika furnishes the tilled and prepared soil from which alone could sprout the delicate seed of Divinity, now imprisoned in the Kundalini or the serpent-coil of man, which sums up the cosmic energy of all life.

Does the creative artist always require a mundane medium for his self-expression? He does require it in the lower altitudes of life. But a Jeevanmukta does not require any medium at all.

The saint without even a cadjan leaf or a pamphlet to his credit is as much a creative artist as Kalidasa or Shakespeare. His medium of expression is his own Tejas or self-effulgence, like sunshine from the sun, spreading peace and tranquillity. For, the Jeevanmukta has mastered the rhythm of life and is one with the pulse-beats of the universe and he is the greatest creative artist ; for he has attained the final goal of both life and art.

Sincerity is the base of Yoga. Sincerity like the spring in a sandy bed clears automatically the grains of sand that choke its own throat and slowly but surely the initial struggling ooze becomes a marvellous perennial flow in due time by God's grace. Unattached sincere work is the purest joy on earth like spring-water.

Silence and sound, how are they related to each other ? Like the river and the sea ? Speech is self-expression and silence is self-realisation — silence that forgets the objective environment. True speech is Yoga-Sadhana to silence and true silence is Yoga-Sadhana to speech. Unless so based, speech leads to vanity and egoism and commercial waste and the chaos of plenty as in modern ways of life and hinders self-realisation.

In any true view of great art there is no audience except the artist himself. A master craftsman in his infinite absorption in his work, in his highest and loneliest hours of communion, never thinks of the audience. There is a complete annihilation of duality, in the transcendental joy of *swa-anubhava*, or self-experience and self-expression. The artist's soul is the audience as well as the auditor. Auditor and audience merge into one, in the God-intoxicated, inspired artist. Matter and form become one. Sound and sense become one, even as Kalidasa formulates the basic rule of literature and art in the opening stanza of *Raghuvamsa*. If these great conditions of art are not satisfied, the result is not creative art or literature, but mere commercial production, coming at its best under De Quincey's classification of "literature of knowledge" and not of power.

Literary composition, all great art indeed, is one of the authentic modes of self-realization, releasing and subliming the flow of mind energy in rhythmic patterns, thus infusing greater tranquillity in human affairs. Art needs no ritual or ceremony but a profound sincerity of thought and feeling that detaches the gross body at the golden end of the pen and liberates the inner spirit of man to survey and comprehend to the full, and to compose the endless diversities and conflicts of life in this mysterious universe.

The great South Indian Sanskrit poet and statesman and Advaiti, Neelakanta Deekshitar's definition of the nature of creative art is the best to my mind and is quite in keeping with our own authentic traditions of art and life, always inseparable.

He says that "Kavitha itself is a Yoga-Sadhna." Self-expression in art is an authentic mode of self-realization — a Yoga that transforms the mind energy into its higher forms till Ananda is realized, a state where work is still dynamic but rhythmic, where the mind loses its lower accents and tones and acquires the higher. The restless, the predatory, the acquisitive and the selfish instincts of the mind are transformed into the peaceful, the non-predatory, non-acquisitive and selfless spontaneities of the soul and usher in a state and a society where the policeman is the individual.

Art conceived and executed as Yoga-Sadhana and not as shapely products for the gains of commerce, kills the Asura qualities in man and liberates the imprisoned Atma Gunas as outlined in the Bhagavat Gita, thus slowly transforming the human into the divine in the ever-ascending spiral of human consciousness.

Art as Yoga destroys the quality that erects the conflicting barriers and limitations of life and enables you to see the unity in diversity, the oneness of all life from amoeba to man. This "vision splendid" is reached only when the restless and unsteady mind is slowly sublimated through rhythm, through the immersion of the mind in the beatitude of Nada-Brahmam or rhythmic sound.

Pray, remember that sound is the first-born of creation and rhythm the first-born of sound. Music is the grand-child of rhythm. Rhythm is the corner-stone of cosmic life. Rhythm is the mother of peace and tranquillity and of dynamic, selfless work, *Nishkamy Karma*. Rhythm is the root source of all matter constructive energy which, in the *Leela* or play of creation, interlocks itself into a rhythmic pattern as the till now impregnable fortress of the atom and the molecule, the vivid crystallization of energy into matter. Science, in the innocence of its ignorance of the true cosmic process, is seeking light and knowledge by the back staircase, knowledge of creation through destruction. And the politician soaked in power-politics releases through the scientist this imprisoned energy in the atom through the wrong way, imperilling the happiness of mankind and the peace of the world.

Flood water, if canalized, irrigates ; otherwise it inundates and destroys. Atomic energy as released through science is destructive ; released through art as a Yoga-Sadhana into rhythm and *Nada-brahmam*, and *Divya Nama Sankirtan* it divinizes the ascent and consciousness of man and the whole of life.

Creative art is an enrichment of the range and quality of consciousness and not a mere accumulation of cyclopedic knowledge. Art becomes a Yoga-Sadhana when self-expression based on rhythm and Swa-anubhava gently takes you on to self-realization surely like the river to the sea, for all her lazy wanderings. That is why rhythmic activity based on Swa-anubhava and Swa-dharma is so vital to the individual. It never destroys, but integrates and builds. So truly creative art is bound to take you to the foot-stool of God — give you Brahma-Jnana, self-realization, the highest knowledge.

Life, art and criticism, under this selective conception of a great ideal, become the noblest striving of man, work that is worship at the most exalted level, seeking Divine grace and joy in a dynamic daily surrender of your ego through Nishkamya Karma based on Dharma and love.

DON'T FORGET

RAJESH RAHI

When the flowers bloom not
nor do the rains fall
you permeate my thoughts.

Forget not to convey
in your epistle next
you are full of beans.

We long for a drop of rain
and yearn for a patch of green
Ah ! the days are dry
and the nights wet with tears.

Forget not to impart
in your epistle next
you suffer no pain.

When the followers bloom not
nor do the rains fall
you permeate my thoughts.

THE CLICHE AND INDO-ENGLISH FICTION

DR. KAISER ZOHA ALAM

C. P. Snow coined the phrase "corridors of power" in his novel *Homecomings*. In the author's note to his novel which he interestingly named *Corridors of Power*, Snow tells us that the catchy phrase was picked up and used by journalists and reviewers so many times that it turned into a cliché. When Snow was charged with using a cliché for a title, he retorted, "If a man hasn't the right to his own cliché, who has?" Snow's consolation was that at least he had used his own cliché. A cliché is "a hackneyed phrase or expression which a writer keeps ready stock set up in his mind and puts down automatically without troubling to find an original phrase of his own" (Wood, 1962. 47). The fact, however, remains that the phrases of this nature, as Wood, too, has emphasized, "should, as far as possible, be avoided" as "at one time they may have been forceful; now they are stale and ineffective". Vallins (1960. 103) talks of "the sterile lifelessness of a cliché."

What needs to be added here is that even native writers of English have not been able to avoid cliché altogether. This, for example, is a sentence from W. Somerset Maugham's novel *Cakes and Ale* (p. 24): "When all's said and done, that's the only thing that counts." The phrase has been used by Mulk Raj Anand in *Two Leaves and A Bud* (p. 91), by Khushwant Singh in *Train to Pakistan*; by Arun Joshi in *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas* (p. 50), *The Apprentice* (p. 80), and *The Last Labyrinth* (Pr. 202, 203) and by Uma Vasudev in *The Song of Anasuya* (p. 71). There is little doubt that it is not possible to shun the cliché completely. They come handy and readily to a writer and, as many believe, sometimes add flavour to a writing. Crystal and Davy think that the occasional cliché is a feature of the informality of a text (1969, 114). Fowler (1968. 9) feels that writers would be needlessly handicapped if they were never allowed to choose certain expressions — they are perhaps the fittest way of saying what needs to be said. Fowler quotes J. A. Spender: "The hardest worked cliché is better than the phrase that fails."

When Sheila says, in Arun Joshi's *The Foreigner* (p.149), "Time is a great healer", Sindi argues — "However deeply one might feel, it always boils down to a cliché, a proverb from high school grammar". Joshi apparently confuses between a cliché and a proverb. A cliché can usually be traced to a definite author, while the latter is just as often anonymous (Pei, 1953. 144). Undoubtedly, however, many proverbs, due to gross overuse, have turned into clichés and in this study we do not intend to make any sharp distinction between them. It should also be borne in mind, at the same time, that the judgement whether a certain expression is a cliché or not is often a subjective one. While analysing R. K. Narayan's "A House and Two Goats", (1978) Rao quotes the phrase "live, flourish and die" and says "it is not as much of a cliché as it appears; there is an unsuspected, seemingly endless agony between *flourish* and *die*". Pei (1953. 143) notes that the ancestry of the cliché "is nine times out of ten literary, even though it may have entered the universal spoken language". Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Keats and Kipling, etc., for example, have been fruitful sources of clichés for the English-speaking world.

The point that I would like to make in this study is that Indian writers in English sometimes do not exert to find a novel or original phrase. Instead they prefer to make do with some prefabricated or conventional overused "Pat" expression. Singh (1977. 185) finds it not unusual to come across clichés in their writings. One possible explanation and the one that we would like to make forcefully here is that the presence of these clichés in their writings can be explained, to some extent, when we bear in mind the fact that English is not their first language. When we adopt L_2 or a foreign language at the creative level we are perhaps more prone to confront such difficulties as we are often bookish and our vocabulary is anything but vast though, to assert once again, even the native speakers are faced with these obstacles. In fact, "some commentators on Indian English have noticed an excessive use of cliché" (McCrum, Cran, MacNeil, 1986). Chitre (1978) observes that "diseased English (quick-frozen, ready to use English) is normal English in India and the official English, very widely used in India, is the deadliest form of diseased English. Nambiar (1978) also stresses that a characteristic feature of Indian English, as presented by earlier British writers, is the presence of clichés. When Nergja Dala (1978) reviews Pramilla Bharat Singh's *The Reluctant Bride* (Sterling) she finds it full of clichés (*Times of India* October 22, 1978).

I would like to make my point particularly with the help of illustrations borrowed from the representative fictional writings of Indian writers in English (on the basis of random sampling).

Though Raja Rao's writings are relatively free from clichés we occasionally do get instances like "to tell you the truth" [*Kanthapura*, p. 20]. One comes across "to tell the truth" in Ved Mehta's *Delinquent Chacha* [p. 110], Joshi's, *The Strange Case* [p. 132], Uma Vasudev's *The Song of Anasuya* [p. 3] and Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* [p. 114, p. 301]. Mulk Raj Anand's writings are interspersed with cliché-like expressions, e. g., the conventional phrase "wonder of all wonders" [*Coolie* p. 31] and phrases "going to the dogs" [*Coolie*, p. 126; also in R. K. Narayan's *The Guide*, p. 180] and "he had missed the bus" [*Coolie*, p. 262]; "waxing philosophical" *Two Leaves and a Bud*, p. 18; "waxed eloquent" in Narayan's *The Guide*, p. 154 and "wax poetic" in Joshi's *The Strange Case*,) "he felt like a fish out of water" [*Two Leaves and a Bud*, p. 26] "at a standstill" [*Two Leaves*, p. 29], "discretion is the better part of valour" [*Death of a Hero*, Anand, p. 13], "under the thumb of his father" [*Death of a Hero*, p. 59], "hitch our wagon to the Maharaja's fading star" [*Death of a Hero*, p. 74; also in *My God Died Young*, Sasthi Brata, p. 147]. Anand evidently uses various kinds of cliché. Cowasjee [1976, p. 59] quotes a passage from Anand's *Two Leaves* and concludes that the passage is full of well-worn clichés.

The same goes for R. K. Narayan whose favourite phrase is the Siamese twins "odds and ends" [*Swami and Friends*, p. 32, p. 195; *The Vendor of Sweets*, p. 25, 119, 158]. "Odds and ends" appears to be Joshi's pet expression, too, because he has used it both in *The Foreigner* (p. 162) and *The Strange Case* (p. 62). "Odds and ends" has also been used by Abbas in *Maria* (p. 47). Talking of Narayan's *Swami and Friends*, it has "by any chance" (p. 44), "the servant beat a hasty retreat" (p. 44) "drove home the point" (p. 51), "half a mind" (p. 88), "Right O" (p. 90), "more easily said than done" (p. 129) also in *The Strange Case*, Joshi, (p. 65, "in the pink of health" (p. 141), "nip this tendency in the bud" (p. 152), "stereotyped question" (p. 169) and "he is a gem" (p. 173) *Swamy and Friends* is Narayan's first full-length work of fiction and that perhaps explains why it contains a fair sprinkling of clichés. Of the "big three", Narayan perhaps uses more of such expressions and some of them have been used again and again. One of the possible reasons may be that simplicity is the hallmark of Narayan's style. The following are some more examples from Narayan's works :

“To make a clean breast of it all” (p. 109), “like a bolt from the blue” (p. 147), “cleared out” (p. 205) and “bag and baggage” (p. 205): *The Guide*. “cleared out” and “bag and baggage” have been used again in his *The Bachelor of Arts* (p. 117.) “A fault-finding mood” (p. 22), “a stone’s throw” (p. 29), “where there was a will there was a way” (p. 112) and “out of sight out of mind” (p. 144): *The Bachelor of Arts*. “Thus far and no further” (p. 144) and “for reasons best known to them” p. 153; also in *The Song of Anasuya*, Uma Vasudev, (p. 35); *A Tiger for Malgudi*. “Best chum” (p. 6), “ravages of time” and “a whit lost” (p. 42); *My Days*. “stick to the point” (p. 27), “It goes without saying” (p. 61). “go straight to the point” (p. 139), “you have beaten about the bush” (p. 139), “unheard of” (p. 143), “go to hell” (p. 147) and “from time immemorial” (p. 164): *The Vendor of Sweets*. “A serious blunder” (p. 57): *The English Teacher*.

These are from Malgonkar’s books:

“Rank and file of the spectators” (p. 9), “the stormy petrel” (p. 36), “putting the clock back” (p. 89), “all told” (p. 125), “beaten them to pulp” (p. 178) and “paled into insignificance” (p. 267): *A Bend in the Ganges*. “At breakneck speed” (p. 16), “made good his escape” (p. 365), “call it a day” (p. 111) - *Spy in Amber*.

Kamala Markandaya:

“In the twinkling of an eye” (p. 25), “next to impossible” (p. 180): *Nectar in a Sieve*. “Umpteen babies” (p. 49), “umpteen servants” (p. 200), “all and sundry” (p. 45), “at her wit’s end” (p. 76), “cat’ll be out of the bag” (p. 208), “she felt she was on fire” (p. 218), “cry over spilt milk” (p. 233) and “at the end of the tether”: *Two Virgins* (“near the end of the tether” in Joshi’s *The Strange Case*). “Needless to say” (p. 1, p. 14, p. 21, p. 43), “born and brought up” (p. 15), “few loose ends still to be tied” (p. 20) and “out of the question” (p. 21): *Possession*.

A possible explanation as to why Raja Rao and Markandaya [though “needless to say” is her pet expression] use fewer stock phrases and formulae may be that both of them have been away from India for long.

Arun Joshi’s writings:

“For no accountable reason” [p. 25], “much aplomb” [p. 36], “some big shot” [p. 40], “to do the needful” [p. 65, p. 146], “the long and the short of the story” [p. 66], “wag

your tongue" [p. 114], "dirty linen" [p. 79], "head over heels" [p. 91], "gone haywire" [p. 92], "cooked up this cock and bull story" [p. 204]: *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas*.

"In no uncertain terms" [p. 25], "talk of the town" [p. 31], "something is better than nothing" [p. 42], "to cut a long story short" (p. 60, p. 107), "the pros and cons of a case" (p. 65), "in a nutshell" [p. 68], "axe to grind" [p. 71], "out of the ordinary" [p. 110], "by hook or by crook" [p. 113] — an instance of Siamese twins, "rise to the occasion" [p. 117], "in due course" [p. 118] *The Apprentice* "Pain in the neck" [p. 113]: *The Last Labyrinth*.

In Anita Desai's books we get uses of this type only few and far between. In her *Voices in the City*, however, we get "ivory tower" [p. 201] and "lull before storm" [p. 226] etc. Bhabani Bhattacharya has used "played his cards well" [p. 28], "article of faith" [p. 9], "first things first" (p. 34) "like a bombshell" [p. 34] and "life is a game of cards" (p. 79) in his *So Many Hungers!* and "the less said the better" (p. 39) in *Shadow From Ladakh*. In addition to a number of items of this nature, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* carries "crystal clear" and his *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* "who is to bell the cat" [p. 27]. Ahmed Ali's *Ocean of Night* carries "build castles in the air" [p. 123]. Santha Rama Rau's *The Adventuress* has "I'll keep my fingers crossed" [p. 74] and "in love and war, all's fair" [p. 168] and Sasthi Brata's *My God died Young* "they'll hit the bull's eye." We find "facts and figures" [p. 68], "took it for granted" [p. 69], "classical joke" [p. 74] and "like deadwood" in Nayantara Sahgal's *Storm in Chandigarh* and "best possible investments" [p. 98] and "throwing money down the drain" [p. 98] in Saros Cowasjee's *Goodbye to Elsa*. "Suffice it to say" [p. 35] and "out of the blue" [p. 141] in Uma Vasudev's *The Song of Anasuya*, "as luck would have it" [*My Story*, Kamala Das, p. 82], "nobodies" [*The Girls from Overseas*, Nergis Dalal, p. 24], "more often than not" [*Beyond Punjab*, Prakash Tandon, p. 71], "irregular hours" [p. 124] and "to top it all" in "The Mixed Metaphor" [in Keki Daruwala's *Sword and Abyss*] are some more interesting examples from these writings. It may not be out of place to mention here that Chinua Achebe has used "as luck would have it" twice in his short story "Uncle Ben's Choice".

Many similes found in these writings are indeed "mere cliches with very little life left in them" [Vallins, 1960, 44] e. g., "she is like a sister to me" [*The Guide*, Narayan, p. 78] "you

are as a sister to me ” [*Kanthapura*, Raja Rao, p. 37], “ she was still as stone ” [*The Strange Case* Joshi, p. 62], “ the cool words hit him like a blow ” [p. 5], “ he was impetuous, like a boy ” [p. 91] and “ for sometime he would live like a king ” [p. 161] in Bhattacharya’s *So Many Hungers* ! “ his fingers were like ice ” [p. 373], “ I am going to stick here like a glue ” [p. 350], “ money was spent like water ” [p. 31] in Malgonkar’s *A Bend in the Ganges* and “ the room is an oven ” in Desai’s *Voices*. The devotees in Narayan’s *The Guide* held Raju “ as if he was a baby ”. The touch of the hand was likened to a flame in Markandaya’s *Two Virgins* and Malgonkar’s *A Bend in the Ganges*. The so-called “ stabilizers ” like “ as a matter of fact ” (*The Strange Case*, p. 73) are not uncommon either. It goes without saying that they appear stock and trite and are in use on a large scale and often indiscriminately in India and generally have a first-to-hand quality about them. Perhaps they help the writers present the goings-on a little more realistically and spontaneously.

Wood (1962, 47) has roughly classified the cliché into seven broad divisions. It is interesting to note that we get examples of all these types in the Indian writing in English.

i) *Conventional phrases or expressions :*

- “ the evening of the life ” (*Storm in Chandigarh*, p. 5)
- “ by leaps and bounds ” (*Storm in Chandigarh*, p. 61)
- “ wheel of time ” (*Death of a Hero*, Anand, p. 26)
- “ jaws of death ” (*Death of a Hero*, p. 84)
- “ for all practical purposes ” (*Maria*, Abbas, p. 45)

ii) *The Conventional Adjective :*

- “ Golden promises ” (*Two Leaves and a Bud*, Anand, p. 6)

iii) *The Conventional Verb :*

- “ the engine screamed ” (*Coolie*, p. 174); “ he shepherd-ed them ” (*Storm in Chandigarh*, p. 47); “ the sentry barked ” (*A Bend in the Ganges*, p. 182). The humanizing use of the verbs “ hissing ” and “ stabbing ” seems to be very common with them.

iv) *The Conventional Adverb :*

- “ The fire was blazing fiercely ” (*Nectar in a Sieve*, p. 56) “ Sheepishly ” is in very common use in these writings.

v) *Circumlocution :*

- “ the edge of her tongue was like a pair of scissors ” (i. e. ‘ Talkative ’) — (*Untouchable*, Anand)

“ We have only a loin-cloth width of land ” (*Kanthapura*, Raja Rao, p. 179)

vi) *Vogue words* :

“movie” — “a Bargman movie” (*The Strange Case*; p. 95); “fellow-travellers” (*A Bend in the Ganges*, p. 355), “jet” — “jet of water” (*Ocean of night*, p. 62), “jets of white stream” (*Voices*, p. 5); “electricity” “electric current” — (*Ocean of Night*, p. 45), “electric shock” (*Maria*, Abbas, p. 43); “Valve” is another vogue word to be found in these writings again and again.

vii) *Hackneyed and Pointless Similes* :

“My old servant had not understood the purpose of my wanderings but had remained at his post like a dutiful Casabianca” (*The Foreigner*, Joshi, p. 352)

“They were all staring at him making him conscious of their fear and hatred, like characters in some dance drama” (*A Bend in the Ganges*, p. 132)

“They just gazed at me, as I have noticed Indian village urchins gazing at a passing elephant in our villages” (“Bosanski Novi”, Kaa Naa Subramanyam)

Indian writers in English have not been evidently very successful in avoiding these hardened set phrases or cliches. Ullmann (1966, p. 166) would like the writers to rejuvenate the set expressions and infuse new life into them. It would be perhaps not a tall claim that now and then our writers have been able to do so. It is satisfying to note that in these writings cliches on the surface do not always reflect deeper cliches of thought. The sincerity of most of them can hardly be doubted. May be the oral tradition and the actual speech habits, often replete with cliches, get reflected. The learners of English in India are taught during the formative period, idioms, phrases and sayings, etc., so seriously and diligently that they often become an integral and essential part of their linguistic repertoire and keep making appearances in their speech and writing.

As we know, an attempt has been made, often unconsciously, to remedy the situation, at least to some extent, by taking resort to Indianisms. With some reservations, we approve of many of them though, in any case, they should not be overdone. Some of the verbs and phrases introduced by Mulk Raj Anand, for example, are perhaps instances of over-doing. If the writers go on taking liberties with the language in this manner the result may be ridiculous. Instead of saying “nip it in the bud”, Raja Rao, in a characteristically Indian way, has said “crush in the seed”. Money has been frequently used for comparisons. Also there are often hyperbolic numerical assertions — “The saying

is worth a hundred thousand rupees" (*Train to Pakistan*, Khushwant Singh). Let us cite a few more examples from Indian fiction in English:

"As long as he is there, no one can harm a single hair of my head."

"Where does your wealth reside, Babu Sahib? My poor home is in Jhelum district."

"Does my lap bite you?"

"No one can stop anyone's mouth."

"Have you not mother or sister in your home?"

"drinking water out of the same pitcher."

"Don't eat my head."

"bread of illegality."

"your good name."

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PARADISAL MILIEU

K. V. ADVANI

Wholesome and mellow values,
Do not come from out of the blue.
Sage-minds with epic endeavours,
Keep fragrant truth's paradisal milieu.
When love sweetly permeates life,
The moth in man awakens,
To sacrifice his treasured identity ;
He becomes a dot in truth's lucence.
It is the fragrant honey in flower,
That attracts a honey-bee, ever a-flutter ;
Nocturnal moth attains consummation,
In brasing beauty's lustre.
All are not moths or honey-bees ;
Some have snake type of mind,
With subtle and overt designs,
To smother the victim and bleed him white.
When the delinquent in man is alive.
He flouts every norm and decent value ;
Sex appeal or silver nurture his soul,
And he happily prospers in tenebrous milieu.
Where is the seed-flame of truth,
To ignite sleeping lustre of soul ?
Where is the thirst of poetry and song,
Unquenchable by rose-wine bowl ?

THE FIRST BORN

(SHORT STORY)

Dr. V. V. B. RAMA RAO

[This short story won a Merit Award in a contest conducted by the British Council (South India) in 1985]

— *Editor*

Having finished reading the letter, Venkatramayya sat staring at the wall for a long while. It was difficult to decide what to do. He began pacing up and down the room. Finally he made up his mind.

“ Oi ! here’s a letter from our boy,” he called out as he entered the sick room.

“ Did he ? Are they all safe and doing well ? Are they coming ? ” She gathered all her strength and sat up leaning her back against the pillows. “ Where’s it ? ”

She took it with trembling fingers. She tried hard to focus but the writing disappointed her. She winced and heaved out a sigh.

“ I can’t write now. You write and tell him not to come. There’s time yet. I don’t think I am in all that danger. Kindly write a brief message and post it. ”

She was asking him to write to him not to come.

He began thinking, recapitulating and analysing.

But.....God forbid.....if what should not happen happened... It would be difficult to live with a bad name and a nagging memory. Any other tribulation would be tolerable but not slander. He would never forgive himself for a failure at that juncture.

Venkatramayya produced a smile forcing a sparkle into his eyes .. “ That’s all right. I’ll write to him. ”

Venkatramayya finished reading aloud the post card he had written and looked at his wife. After the first few words, she lapsed into sleep. He went on staring at her.

She thought that the letter was from the elder one and sat up. But the writing on the letter disappointed her—not only that, as they say, a stone fell in her heart.

Perindevamma's heart bled to see her husband's face. As a mother she knew how she brought up the two sons. Though he had great deal of love for both, she felt, her husband was rather shy to show his love for the elder one. He was always afraid of hurting her. For this reason he showed more affection for her own son, the younger one. Only she knew of what delicate mettle her husband's heart had been made.

"There is a letter from our son," he announced but what he had meant was "here's a letter from your son".

Poor man, he thought that she would jump with joy hearing of a letter from her son. She would feel on top of a hill with elation, he imagined. The good man that he had always been, how would he wade out of this muddle? Perindevamma was lost in thought.

It needed a lot of tact, expedience and art to tell a falsehood. Truth is not believed so easily as people believe in artful lies. She knew her husband's mind. He would wince at the smallest hurt given to her. It was his affection, his large-heartedness. But how could she tell him that the first born was the apple of her eye?

Thoughts were a strain on the mind and with the exertion her eyelids dropped again.

Perhaps it would be necessary to call the elder one and ask him to stay for a month or two—Venkatramayya thought for the tenth time. It would bring him the strength of a mountain. He was the one who'd share his responsibility with affection and genuine concern. He knew what it was to be like that to suffer. But but he should not be hasty. After all the poor woman's condition had been very frail and on no account should he give her more pain than she had been already suffering.

"I have my duty", he told himself. "I've grown hard after having 'sent away' my first wife in her prime. I was a stone—but this one, she has been a flower." The tears that did not come into the eyes evaporated—he heaved out a heart-rending sigh.

He picked up his upper cloth from the "parrot's perch"* and told the woman who came to cook that his wife had been asleep and asked her to be vigilant. He drew the doors close and walked out to post the letter to the younger one.

* A wooden bracket with pegs on which shirts and items of clothing are hung.

Perindevi opened her eyes. Her head was aching with thoughts eddying without relent. However hard she had tried she could not shut off the words of the daughter-in-law, her own son's wife. "We spent around thousand on travel alone. Who cares for us and who heeds my husband, poor man's advice? It is his delusion. The old lady, unnatural woman, loves the other son, not her own. Psch! She does not know the value of her own son whom she had borne. There are some strange people who do not have even the sweetness of the mother's belly."

The daughter-in-law was saying this to the old maid-servant. Perindevi felt her heart and the entrails being twisted into knots.

She wanted to find in her the daughter that God had not blessed her with. She was not afraid of work. She had always been considerate and understanding. She never allowed anybody to touch a bit of the household chores as long as she had been up and doing. She always had things sent upstairs to the son and the daughter-in-law who after all took a holiday with them. The son and his wife would never come and sit with her while she ate.

"The old lady needs someone to be by her. I'd go down little mother," said the old lady employed to cook for the family.

Perindevamma would never forget the kindness of the old lady. The young woman got the meaning of the cook but then she flared out: "If I sit by that sick woman, who'd look after my husband and my children? If she calls out I can go down and look to her needs."

The young woman had a way of emphasizing the possessives and Perindevamma did not mind these as long as she was doing well. But now she was helpless. She had to give up going upstairs. Halfway up she would get palpitation and the doctor suggested she occupy the bedroom downstairs. Neglected years of diabetes told on her heart and there was high blood pressure too.

"No, sir, I would not go up at all. If I stay down at least I would be contributing to the security of the house. My hearing is excellent still and I can be a watch dog," she told the doctor.

"Both the children and the respected one wouldn't even brush their teeth if they don't have idli ready along with their second cup of coffee. Even sambar is a must. Idli in the morning and poori with curry in the evening are a must in our house there," said Visala to the old woman in the kitchen on the very

second day they arrived and kept her busy. The old woman never uttered a syllable though her work was doubled suddenly. Perindevi went on observing things.

Visala — what a name and what irony. It was only in her name that there was all the largeness — but then what's the use — if you cut your own stomach the contents would roll down to your feet. She remembered the adage and sighed. Her head began to ache as it never did before. She closed her eyes hard.

"I have been observing for whole week now. Why doesn't the young man come down and sit with you even for a while? Is he all right?" — asked Venkatramayya once in the privacy of the sick room.

Perindevamma's eyes became wet and she only sighed.

The children of the first born would not leave her for a minute. Like Rama and Lakshmana they moved together and they would keep her company and play with her. "We would rather stay with you here, naanamma," they'd say. That drew her affectionate tears and invariably she would embrace them and smell their sweet heads.

On the day his son was about to leave on the expiry of his leave, Venkatramayya wanted to say "Stay for another month," but didn't.

"He has given a thousand rupees while leaving," Venkatramayya told his wife with a beaming face, after he saw his son off.

"I know he would," said Perindevi wiping off a tear. Though she did not spell it out in so many words, she knew at her heart why tears came into her eyes.

"My son is there too who shared my blood and I have borne him. He brought in a girl saying that he has married her. It was a love marriage he said. When she wrote that she had been unwell, they came but came as a couple on a holiday trip honeymooning. They would not come downstairs and she had to send up everything for them. Did they ever ask them how they had been getting along. Of course the daughter-in-law may not be in the know of things. But her son, her flesh and blood, should he not understand the strain on their meagre finances? He does know that they do not have hidden treasures.

Money apart, did the young woman think in terms of their responsibilities? Did she ever show even a little of affection? Formality in her case had never ripened into affectionate concern. There would be no point in telling her that. Doesn't she have a mother of her own?

Venkatramayya looked worry-ridden. One day he went in determined to have a talk with his wife. Not quite knowing where to begin or how, he kept pacing up and down confused like a cat with singed paws. Her woman's insight told Perindevamma what lay on her dear husband's sensitive mind.

"Did you use up the last thousand in the bank?" she asked him coolly.

"Let it go. Whatever can we do? After all we spent it on our needs, on absolute necessities. If we can't spend it now what would be its use?"

"Whatever you may think, I have this to say of this son of ours. He has grown up, been earning money but doesn't know its value. It is all your fault, my fault and then it is our karma too. He does not know hardship of any kind and he thinks that still he is a kid basking in paternal warmth. We allowed him to grow up like that. What he does is play and what he uttered song. Withdraw the money that you have put in my name and we leave the rest to the one above."

Tears eddied in her large eyes.

Perindevamma could not tolerate and keep mum any longer. Slowly she got up and went upstairs resting after every two or three hours. The door was ajar. She could see her son in bed with a book in his hand. In the other he held a glass and on a table nearby there was a bottle and a jug of water. She never noticed the jug ever before. The daughter-in-law was sitting in a chair hemming her daughter's frock.

Unhesitatingly Perindevamma entered.

"Well mother, you? Why did you come up?" The young man put the glass on the table and tried to cover it but did not know how to.

"Aren't you asleep, respected one?" Visala asked getting up.

"I don't feel like sleeping. You, stone-hearted.. is this what you have been doing all these weeks? You have never asked the frail old man how he has been getting the money to run the household and you never bothered to think of tending this sick mother. You never ask whether I'm alive or dead. You want your luxuries and your own happiness. Whenever do you realize that you have a responsibility and a duty to the family? On top of all that this evil, vicious habit, never known before in our tradition-bound family, pure as fire. How dare you bring this wretched stuff in here, into what used to be your revered father's room. Aren't you ashamed of yourself?"

Perindevamma grew wild and said everything she had been harbouring in her heart of hearts for quite some time.

"You asked us to come and perhaps what we eat appears to be too much for you." Visala hit back. Perindevi was wriggling in excruciating pain. The sky appeared to be falling right on her head in rent pieces.

"Hm, let the one experience the fruits of the deeds one does knowingly or unknowingly. It is impossible to escape what is ordained according to one's own Karma," she said and came down never to go up again.

Early the next morning Perindevamma told her husband: "Please make the reservations by the next available train for Visala and her husband and children. If they leave I'll have some peace of mind."

Venkatramayya knew what was happening but did not want to give his wife any more pain by saying anything more. He understood her and went to the railway station.

Now the younger one wrote to say that he would come again.

Venkatramayya returned after having posted the letter he had written. As soon as he returned Perindevamma asked him to send a telegram to the first born in a tear-strained voice.

On the third day the elder one and his family arrived.

"Mother, by God's grace you are well. I panicked seeing the telegram!"

"Oh, I'll never be well again, my dear one," she sighed and looked around. She saw the two grandsons, the daughter-in-law and her beloved son standing by the side of her husband. "Now I am happy and contented. I don't care what happens now," she declared.

The next day Visala and her husband arrived with their children.

Venkatramayya and Perindevamma exchanged glances silently.

"Father, by way of caution I sent a telegram to brother before starting. I am happy he has come too..."

Perindevamma remained silent.

While the family was having their dinner Perindevamma had difficulty in breathing.

"I'll fetch the doctor," said Venkatramayya and dashed out. Everyone in the house stood by the sick bed.

"Dear, go and call your sister," said Perindevamma gasping for breath. The daughter-in-law brought Visala downstairs.

"My dear one, there's nothing I can give you. This chain was given to me by the elder one. In those days it weighed five olas — but since you don't have a daughter give this away

to Visala. ... you take my bangles. if the younger one keeps the chain at all, it can be given to the little grand-daughter at her wedding ...” Perindevamma was talking only to the elder daughter-in-law.

“Why do you say these things, beloved one, you are fine and in a day or two you’ll be all right again. Believe me...” The elder one tried to reassure her.

“We have been spending a thousand every time we make a trip here,” Visala drew her lips close.

“Let that be...Re babu, my dear one, you know all but let me tell you one thing more. You take after your angelic mother. I have a small wish. Though I haven’t borne you, I know how much you are devoted to me. I ask of you only one thing. You must light the funeral pyre...”

“My dear mother, why do you utter such inauspicious words in a full household...You must protect us for several years to come.”

“These are not inauspicious words. With a son like you it would be a pleasure to go on living...But it is not in our hands. Look after your father well, he has a heart softer than butter. He never would utter anything that would hurt me. He is so delicate and so godlike...”

She could not speak further. She felt choked.

“You need not worry about him, dear mother. Father would live like a Raja. You underestimate my younger brother. He is educated and knowledgeable but perhaps a little too young to realize any seriousness ...”

“Your brother, hm, and a son indeed...” Perindevamma clutched at her chest and slided back in pain.

“Where is brother?” asked the elder one looking at Visala.

“I think he has gone to a film. Did the lady have a thought that she has another son? People without hearts...” Visala commented vengefully.

“Oi! Hold her there, quick ... She should not breathe her last in bed. It’s inauspicious ...”

While the elder son and his wife were lifting her down to lay her on a mat, without her knowing, Visala broke into a loud wailing.

AWAITING REVIVAL

EUGENE D'VAZ

There was a time
When rainbow sun and wind
were wedded to my emotions
of love, a promise given or forgotten,
then you let your limp fingers
cradle in my palm,
you let your parted lips
be kissed into an enveloping
flame of the world.

I have grown tired.

May be you were not the one
churning my dreams
under the blankets of sleep.
May be your breasts and parting thighs
were the symbols of some colossal celebration
an invitation
or an instigation perhaps.

I wait before a desert of silence.

I see you open and close doors
of the home I have left behind.

Will not the smile of radiant Eros
unfold some other secret
for me to shove under my pillow.
Tomorrow another door has to be unlocked
I know that somewhere
in the little pockets of my soul
the silver key waits
for my fumbling fingers.

RURAL ETHOS IN INDIAN NOVELS

Kamala Markandaya's "Nectar in a Sieve", Raja Rao's "Kanthapura" and Mulk Raj Anand's "The Village"

K. S. LATHA

Many Indian novels in English have used for their setting the village and its life, which reflect the Indian ethos in all its multifacetedness needed for the conveying of the Indian sensibility. Apart from the fact that the majority of India's population lives in villages, the Indian village spells a presence and a mood characteristic of the Indian scene of life. Further, it represents a kind of stable society in which the non-fulfilment of predictable expectations leads to tensions and even crises affecting the lives of the characters concerned. Furthermore, it resists, though often unsuccessfully, any change that socio-economic or ideological forces from outside seek to bring about in its life.

The village in Indian fiction in English is depicted in terms of documentary or romantic realism often expressive of a distinctive personal vision.

More often than not, it is the changing aspect of the village, as against its changeless one, that is projected by the Indian writers in English, who are interested in imaging the impact of industrialism and commercialism, general social awakening and social reform, as also of democratic and socialist ideologies on the Indian masses.

The three novels, viz., *Nectar in a Sieve*, *Kanthapura* and *The Village* focus on different facets of the Indian village and the changeless yet changing spectrum that is Indian rural life.

In the novel, *Nectar in a Sieve* Rukmani, the narrator-heroine, stands for the traditional Indian rural value system and views with concern the setting up of a tannery in her village :

"...The tannery that pollutes the vernal atmosphere of the village with its smells and glamour, and corrodes the values of the people, is the main target of Rukmani's attack. She concedes

that it brings in more money; but there are counter-balancing evils. Greater commercialisation, an alien population, labour unrest and the death of a son, are some of its consequences".¹

Significantly, the village is unnamed which suggests that the image of it projected in the novel is typical of what would be true of any other Indian village, since it brings out the epiphenomena of psychopathology of the average villager, as also the convulsions to which it is subjected as a result of the advent of industrialisation. Indeed,

"One gets the impression that Kamala Markandaya is not reacting to a specific village in India but to the Western audience's image of an Indian village. The poverty of the villagers, along with their ignorance of modern agricultural techniques, is stressed in the long talk Rukmani, the village woman who is the narrator of the novel, has with Kenny, the English doctor, about the use and misuse of cow-dung. Rukmani details the various uses the cow-dung is put to in the village (which precludes its being used as a fertiliser, as Kenny wants) and one feels that Markandaya is playing the tourist guide".²

Raja Rao's novel, *Kanthapura*, unlike *Nectar in a Sieve*, focuses not on the clash of Eastern and Western value systems but on that of castes and other socio-cultural structures considered in the background of the freedom movement. People of different castes are segregated in such a way that lanes are known by their castes. There is a Brahmin street, a potter's quarter, a weaver's quarter, a Sudra quarter and a parish quarter. The novel opens with a graphic description of the village, which brings out its distinctive features related to the drama of existence projected in the novel:

"High on the Ghats is it high up the steep mountains that face the cool Arabian Seas up the Malabar coast is it up Mangalore and Puthur and many a centre of cardamom and coffee, rice and sugarcane, roads, narrow, dusty, rut covered roads, wind through the forests of teak and of jack, of sandal and of sal, and hanging over bellowing gorges and leaping over elephant-haunted valleys, they turn now to the left and now to the right and bring you through the Aiambe and Champa and Mena and Kola passed into the great granaries of trade. There, on the blue waters, they say, our carted cardamoms and coffee gets into the ships the Red men bring and so they say they go across the seven oceans into the countries where our rulers live".³

The focus of the life led in the village is the shrine of the goddess of *Kanthapura*, Kenchemma. And it is to her that they look up for protection and relief from pain and distress which contrasts with what is proposed by Gandhiji's socio-political and economic reforms. The story is unfold through the narration of an old woman, who has lived through *Kanthapura's* troubled history.

"The narrative is hardly very straightforward; there are involutions and digressions. There are meaningful backward glances, there are rhythmic chains of proper names (Rachanna and Chandranna and Madanna; Sampanna and Vaidyanna; Satamma and Rangamma and Puttamma and Seethamma) there are poetic iridescences".⁴

The protagonist of the novel is Moorthy, a staunch follower of Gandhiji, who goes through life, as

"A noble, low, quiet, generous, serene, different and brahmanic, a very prince".⁵

and whose attempts at implementing Gandhian reforms programme create a crisis with which he is unable to cope.

Beyond the village lies the Skeffington Coffee Estate symbolising industrialisation of *Kanthapura*, which is sought to be resisted by the villagers.

While Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* and the unnamed village in Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* are South Indian villages, that figuring as a setting in Mulk Raj Anand's *The Village* is North Indian, which, though manifesting the typical features of rural ethos, have each been used to project a different theme. The village, one of the Trilogy, the other two being *Across the Black Waters* and *The Sword and the Sickle*, which is fashioned as a chronicle of Indian peasant life, traces the revolt of Lal Singh, the youngest son of a peasant, Nihal Singh, of Nandpur against the injustices and social repression, which define the forces of tradition and with which the peasants have to contend. In defying the unjust social order, which characterises his ancestral village as it does many an Indian village, Lal Singh is virtually hounded out of the village. His career symbolises the struggle for the realisation of values, which makes man human, although he is unaware of his heroic role in it experiencing only the ritualistic fears of his community, which, filling him with grave forebodings about his future, make him desperate enough to decide to leave his village for good. Indeed, his action inscapes the incipient rebellion against those aspects of rural ethos in India, which have become

suffocating for sensitive youth like Lal Singh, who fight a losing battle against their legacy of a repressive immemorial order sustained by superstition, feudalism and petrified social structures.

Mulk Raj Anand evokes the typical atmosphere of an Indian village through a distillation of the experience of his protagonist, who, witnessing the prevalence of ignorance and deceit in his village, becomes rebellious. His simmering anger drives him to do what is forbidden — eat in a Muslim shop and have his hair shorn at a hair-cutting saloon in defiance of his faith (Sikhism) for which act of sacrilege he gets his face blackened as a prelude to his being paraded in the streets on a donkey's back, which is the typical rural way of branding a heretic and rebel. His fascination for Maya, infuriates her father, the landlord of the village who falsely accusing him of stealing three bundles of fodder from his farm calls the police. Lalu (Lal Singh), however, manages to escape leaving the village for good and enlisting in the army. Anand's novel, *The Village* stands out among the Indian rural novels in English on account of its emphasis on the pastoral tie binding man and land, as brought out by Lalu's distress at having to leave his village.

Thus, it may be seen that while Kamala Markandaya and Raja Rao convey the rural ethos refracted through the aesthetics of critical realism, Mulk Raj Anand does so through that of humanism.

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SRI AUROBINDO AND T. S. ELIOT

Poetry : As Prayerful Hope

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There really is no need to be apologetic when one decides to study Sri Aurobindo and T. S. Eliot together. There is, at first, the external appositeness. Born on 15 August, 1872, Sri Aurobindo embarked upon super-human endeavours in various fields : politics, philosophy, sociology, Yoga, poetry. Our grateful homage to him who was one of the architects of modern India, one who thrust aside the encrustations of overgrowth on India's cultural tradition and led us to the very foundations of the Indian culture and restored in us the self-confidence and pride that go with an independent nation. He withdrew from the physical on 5th December, 1950 and was laid in Samadhi on 9th. His influence, however, has been spreading in widening circles in politics, Yoga and literature, enriching the fibres of our cultural consciousness.

And, in 1988 we have celebrated the birth centenary of Thomas Stearns Eliot. Younger to Sri Aurobindo by sixteen years, Eliot too was given a long life leading to solid achievement. Like Sri Aurobindo, Eliot handled poetry not for profanation, but for prayer.

T. S. Eliot himself and Sri Aurobindo guard the student in the same manner. No doubt they are overwhelming personalities and super human achievers. Sri Aurobindo the Yogi whose writings fill up thirty volumes and more ; T. S. Eliot the Nobel Laureate whose poetry and criticism have influenced whole generations, as detailed by William Empson :

“I do not propose here to try to judge or define the achievement of Eliot ; indeed I feel, like most other verse writers of my generation, that I do not know for certain how much of my own mind he invented, let alone, how much of it is a reaction against him or indeed a consequence of

misreading him. He has a very penetrating influence, perhaps not unlike an east wind."

Comparatist adventure is like walking the razor's edge. One could always come up with a million superficial resemblances and grow heady with success. For instance, Sri Aurobindo and T. S. Eliot shared an enormous love for cats. The great Yogi had an empathy with the cats in the Ashram and he has even written a charming sonnet on one of them, titled "Despair on the Staircase":

"Mute stands she, lonely on the topmost stair,
An image of magnificent despair;
The grandeur of a sorrowful surmise
Wakes in the largeness of her glorious eyes.
In her beauty's dumb significant pose I find
The tragedy of her mysterious mind.
Yet is she stately, grandiose, full of grace.
A musing mask is her immobile face.
Her tail is up like an unconquered flag,
Its dignity knows not the right to wag.
An animal creature wonderfully human,
A charm and miracle of fur-footed Brahman,
Whether she is spirit, woman or cat,
Is now the problem I am wondering at."

T. S. Eliot, of course, has a whole book of poems dedicated to the feline creature. *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* has fourteen poems to Sri Aurobindo's fourteen-line sonnet! Irrepressibly natty at times, some of the poems attempt a rare verbal parquetry:

"Old Deuteronomy's lived a long time;
He's a cat who has lived many lives in succession.
He was famous in proverb and famous in rhyme
A long while before Queen Victoria's accession.
Old Deuteronomy's buried nine wives
And more — I am tempted to say, ninety-nine;
And his numerous progeny prospers and thrives
And the village is proud of him in his decline.
At the sight of that placid and bland physiognomy,
When he sits in the sun on vicarage wall,
The Oldest Inhabitant croaks: Well, of all ...
Things ... Can it be really! No! Yes! ...'
Ho! Hi!
Oh, my eye!
My mind may be wandering, but I confess
I *believe* it is Deuteronomy!"

And which of us is not fond of Eliot's Macavity, that mystery cat, that fiend in feline shape, that Napoleon of Crime? But, enough of such comparatist pursuit. Let us now come to the in-depth thinkers in these poets whose multiple perspective on the human condition today gives us hope that we may yet be saved from the Abyss by recovering our Faith.

The very first thing that strikes us as we draw close to Sri Aurobindo and T. S. Eliot is the fact that both were excellent scholars of the past. Sri Aurobindo had been a student of the Classical Tripos in Cambridge and after his return to India, he had taken up the study of India's classical age in right earnest. The whole panorama of Indian culture amazed him no end: the Vedas, the Upanishads, the epics, classical Sanskrit drama, the Puranas. He quickly settled down to an apprenticeship in translation and was presently engaged in writing brilliant narrative poems based on the myths and legends of ancient India and proceeded to write appreciative introductions to Kalidasa Vyasa, Valmiki. Sri Aurobindo was no uncritical admirer of this conglomeration in his country's past. But he could notice the precious gems that lay imbedded in the mind-boggling material committed to the palm-leaves down the centuries. As he wrote to his brother Manmohan Ghose:

"I would carefully distinguish between two types of myth, the religious-philosophical allegory and the genuine secular legend. The former and symbolising spirit of mediaeval Hinduism, the religious myths are a type of poetry addressed to a peculiar mental constitution, and the sudden shock of the bizarre which repels occidental imagination the moment it comes in contact with Puranic literature, reveals to us where the line lies that must eternally divide East from West... There remain the secular legends: and it is true that a great number of them are intolerably puerile and grotesque. My point is that the puerility is no essential part of them but lies in their presentment, and that presentment again is characteristic of the Hindu spirit not in its best and most self-realising epochs. They were written in an age of decline, and their present form is the result of literary accident. The Mahabharata of Vyasa, originally an epic of 24,000 verses, afterwards enlarged by a redacting poet, was finally submerged in a vast mass of inferior accretions, the work often of a tasteless age and unskilful hands. It is in this surface mass that the majority of the Hindu legends have floated down to our century."

All the same, Sri Aurobindo felt that just as Kalidasa, Magha and others had culled the best from these legends and trans-

formed them into "dramas and epics of the most delicate tenderness or the most noble sublimity," the poets of today also could extract the finest gems from the confounding mass. In Sri Aurobindo's words,

"To take with a reverent hand the old myths and cleanse them of soiling accretions, till they shine with some of the antique strength, simplicity and solemn depth of beautiful meaning, is an ambition which Hindu poets of today may and do worthily cherish."

This is precisely what Sri Aurobindo proceeded to do in his poetry and dramas. One of his earliest poems, *Love and Death* is based on the legend of Ruru and Pramadvava in the *Mahabharata* and was written "in a white heat of inspiration during fourteen days of continuous writing — in the morning of course." The poem has the utter beauty of the beginning of spring and the language never fails. Sri Aurobindo made a few important changes to make it easier reading in English. Pramadvava, for instance, became Priyumvada. The Love-Death dichotomy is brought into sharper focus with appropriate arguments. There is Yama's attempt to convince Ruru of the enormous loss in sacrificing half his life's span to regain the dead Priyumvada. Old age has its compensations too, says Yama, and shows Ruru, as on a cinematograph, what the young man's future could bring:

"There Ruru saw himself divine with age,
A Rishi to whom infinity is close.
Rejoicing in some green song-haunted glade
Or boundless mountain-top where most we feel
Wideness, not by small happy things disturbed.
Around him, as around an ancient tree
Its seedlings, forms august or flame-like rose;
They grew beneath his hands and were his work;
Great kings were there whom time remembers, fertile
Deep minds and poets with their chanting lips
Whose words were seed of vast philosophies..."

But Ruru prefers to get back his life of love with Priyumvada rather than lead a life of superior achievement as the founding father of a great race. Sri Aurobindo scoured further the history and mythology of India, Greece, Syria, Arabia and Norway for themes to construct his dramas, *Vasavadutta*, *Perseus the Deliverer*, *Rodogune*, *The Viziers of Bassora* and *Eric*. The grand structure of his epic *Savitri* was reared upon the most wonderful poem in the *Mahabharata*, the *Savitri Upakhyaana* that is related in the *Vana Parva*. Thematically he went back two thousand years:

he distilled the essence of two thousand years of intellectual and spiritual endeavours by Indian thinkers and Yogis to build the epical argument. By using the symbolistic motif, he also made *Savitri* utterly contemporaneous. The thrust of the epic's message is the need for transforming mortal life on earth to the immortal life divine. The key to the epic's symbolism has been given by Sri Aurobindo himself :

"Satyavan is the soul carrying the divine truth of being within itself but descended into the grip of death and ignorance ; Savitri is the Divine Word, daughter of the Sun, goddess of the supreme Truth who comes down and is born to save ; Aswapathy, the Lord of the Horse, her human father, is the Lord of Tapasya, the concentrated energy of spiritual endeavour that helps us to rise from the mortal to the immortal planes ; Dhyumatsena, Lord of the Shining Hosts, father of Satyavan, is the Divine Mind here fallen blind, losing its celestial kingdom of vision, and through that loss its kingdom of glory."

T. S. Eliot did not work in an intellectual vacuum either. For his dramas — *Murder in the Cathedral*, *The Family Reunion*, *The Cocktail Party*, *The Confidential Clerk* and *The Elder Statesman* — he sought inspiration in Christianity as well as the classics like the *Eumenides*, the *Alcestis*, the *Ion* and *Oedipus at Coloneus*. His poetry had other inspirations as well. Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* was a major motivation for *The Waste Land*. Fertility rituals, vegetation cults and magic — in short all that we condemn as totem pole culture in our tribal communities — were avidly welcomed by T. S. Eliot as anthropological fertiliser for his poetic creation. Can this unscientific past be reconciled with the scientific present? Yes, says F. R. Leavis :

"It (the anthropological background) plays an obvious part in evoking the particular sense of the unity of life which is essential to the poem. It helps to establish the level of experience at which the poem works, the mode of consciousness to which it belongs...The part that science in general has played in the process of disintegration is matter of commonplace: anthropology is, in the present context, a peculiarly significant expression of the scientific spirit. To the anthropological eye beliefs, religions and moralities are human habits — in their odd variety too human. Where the anthropological outlook prevails, sanctions wither. In a contemporary consciousness there is inevitably a great deal of anthropological, and the background of *The Waste Land* is thus seen to have a further significance."

Tiresias, the Tarot Pack, the Phoenician Sailor, Krishna — all these and many more. Consider this note on Tiresias by Eliot himself :

“Tiresias, although a mere spectator and not indeed a ‘character,’ is yet the most important personage in the poem, uniting all the rest. Just as the one-eyed merchant, seller of currants, melts into the Phoenician Sailor, and the latter is not wholly distinct from Ferdinand, Prince of Naples, so all the women are one woman, and the two sexes meet in Tiresias. What Tiresias sees, in fact, is the substance of the poem.”

What Tiresias sees is a passionless, ludicrous enactment of togetherness, verily a mockery of love and joy. What have we made of the tenderness that brings people together which was once glorified as the soul-togetherness? In the ‘waste land’ of modern concrete jungles and eroded moral values, we are left alone with shadows on the wall. What Tiresias sees is boredom writ large on the face of humanity :

“She turns and looks a moment in the glass,
Hardly aware of her departed lover;
Her brain allows one half-formed thought to pass:
‘Well now that’s done: and I’m glad it’s over.’
When lovely woman stoops to folly and
Paces about her room again, alone,
She smooths her hair with automatic hand,
And puts a record on the gramophone.”

By being alert to the seminal properties of myths and legends, Sri Aurobindo and T. S. Eliot acquired a steel frame that no critic has been able to dismantle with impunity. They reinforced this frame with high philosophy. For Sri Aurobindo, it was Evolution; for T. S. Eliot, Catholic theology.

Whatever be the parameters of his writings, the central core of the argument in Sri Aurobindo’s writings deal with his evolutionary philosophy. The argument, reduced to fundamentals, is simple enough. Omnipresent Reality is made up of Sat (Existence), Chit (Consciousness-Force), Ananda (Bliss) and Supermind (Real Idea) as well as Mind, Psyche, Life and Matter. The former quartet has, in the course of involution, become the latter quartet of our terrestrial travail made up of Matter, Life, Psyche and Mind. A veil now separates Mind from Supermind. In order to reach the Supermind, many levels above the Mind — Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuition, Overmind — will have to be passed. But it can be done, says Sri Aurobindo in his magnificent tome, *The Life Divine* :

“Our evolution in the Ignorance with its chequered joy and pain of self-discovery and world discovery, its half fulfilments, its constant finding and missing, is only our first state. It must lead inevitably towards an evolution in the knowledge, a self-finding and self-unfolding of the spirit, a self-revelation of the divinity in things in that true power of itself in nature which is to us still a Supernature.”

The Christian sensibility is ubiquitous in T. S. Eliot's poetry. There are the powerful lines in *The Waste Land* that leave an almost physical impact on our psyche :

“Who is the third who walks always beside you ?
When I count, there are only you and I together
But when I look ahead up the white road
There is always another one walking beside you
Gliding wrapt in a brown mantle, hooded
I do not know whether a man or a woman
—But who is that on the other side of you ?”

Suddenly it dawns upon us : the hooded man is Christ, our help, our Saviour, our constant friend. And the passage itself is immediately transformed into a Grammar of Faith. We are no more lonely wayfarers in life's journey. There is always the hooded figure walking beside us. There is always Love, Mercy, Compassion, Redemption accompanying our footsteps, if only we tear asunder the veil of Ego that separates us from this companion. Why then feel lonely in this waste land, this arid modern culture where fathers are strangers to sons and the neighbour might as well be a resident in the antipodes ? Come out of your egoistic shell, Eliot tells us, and armed with Faith recognise the Redeemer who is all the time beside you.

Standing in the fragmented civilisation of the West, Eliot could only produce a series of broken images. He could only reflect the reality around and not posit the ideal as a full-fledged image. All the same he admired Dante and did not brush aside the Italian's poem as an artificial structure intent upon producing only an architectonic effect. Eliot considered *The Divine Comedy* as the greatest philosophical poem within his experience.

“That is the advantage of a coherent traditional system of dogma and morals like the Catholic : it stands apart, for understanding and assent even without belief, from the single individual who profounds it.”

Sri Aurobindo, at the cost of being dubbed un-modern, Miltonic and tiresome, preferred not to go in for obscurity in presentation. His civilisation was not fragmented, and 2,000 years of continuous religious experience has kept the past alive

in terms of practising faith. Descriptive, narrative and, philosophical poetry come as no surprise to the modern Indian whose several literatures have been one long experimentation in understanding the nature of Omnipresent Reality. Hence, Sri Aurobindo's presentation of Christ is traditional, straight, easily comprehensible.

“ It is finished, the dread mysterious sacrifice,
Offered by God's martyred body for the world ;
Gethsemane and Calvary are his lot,
He carries the cross on which man's soul is nailed ;
His escort is the curses of the crowd ;
Insult and jeer are his right's acknowledgement ;
Two thieves slain with him mock his mighty death. ”

Inclosed in his egoistic shell of separativity, man does not recognise the presence of his Saviour, but the Saviour does not withdraw in despair :

“ He carries the suffering world in his own breast ;
Its sins weigh on his thoughts, its grief is his :
Earth's ancient load lies heavy on his soul ;
Night and its powers beleaguer his tardy steps,
The titan adversary's clutch he bears ;
His march is a battle and a pilgrimage.
Life's evil smites, he is stricken with the world's pain :
A million wounds gape in his secret heart. ”

With the help of the religious and philosophical past of mankind, Sri Aurobindo and T. S. Eliot were actually exploring ways to answer the ultimate questions based on Time. What has happened *so far* ; what is happening *now* ; and what is to happen *tomorrow* ? . There are the enigmatic opening lines of Eliot's *Four Quartets* :

“ Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past. ”

The past has been a glorious achievement. It is true that man's urge for sin and destruction has played havoc often and decimated civilisations. But the evolutionary urge has triumphed, albeit at a painfully slow pace. To have come up to Mind from mere Matter, that is triumph indeed. Having attained the mental level, has not man accumulated a record of superb achievement ? When we do a *simhavalokana*, what an amazing vista opens before us ! Thus Sri Aurobindo :

“ At first appeared a dim half-neutral tide
Of being emerging out of infinite Nought :

A consciousness looked at the inconscient Vast
 And pleasure and pain stirred in the insensible Void.
 All was the deed of a blind World-Energy :
 Unconscious of her own exploits she worked,
 Shaping a universe out of the Inane.
 In fragmentary beings she grew aware :
 A chaos of little sensibilities
 Gathered round a small ego's pinpoint head ;
 In it a sentient creature found its poise
 It moved and lived a breathing, thinking whole. ”

Nor was this all. Ever since, Mind has been watching the blue heavens and dreams of immortality. T. S. Eliot puts it in his own way, the terribilita of coming face to face with the super-human achievement of the Mind :

“ I have said before
 That the past experience revived in the meaning
 Is not the experience of one life only
 But of many generations — not forgetting
 Something that is probably quite ineffable :
 The backward look behind the assurance
 Of recorded history, the backward half-look
 Over the shoulder, towards the primitive terror. ”

What is happening *now* is verily the subject of Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri* and T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*. As the world came increasingly under the shadows cast by the rise of Hitler and unbridled militarism, Sri Aurobindo and T. S. Eliot worked on their poems bearing foreknowledge like a Tiresias, a Thrijatha. They experimented with the English language so as to get a plastic medium to put their message across to a humanity frozen with terror. Prof. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar has pointed out that while T. S. Eliot wished “ to get *beyond poetry*, as Beethoven, in his later works, strove to get *beyond music*, Sri Aurobindo desired “ to leap over the intervening sensory and intellectual barriers and directly reach the soul, ” Eliot's language hisses with a hopeless anger at times :

“ Ash on an old man's sleeve
 Is all the ash the burnt roses leave.
 Dust in the air suspended
 Marks the place where a story ended.
 Dust inbreathed was a house —
 The wall, the winscot and the mouse.
 The death of hope and despair,
 This is the death of air. ”

The death of air? But when the nuclear radiation kills air for mankind, what more remains of God's creation? And if we remember the Vedic insight that Air is Brahman, "*Namaste Vayo Tvameva Pratyaksham Brahmsi*," the death of air is the death of God as well, the death of faith.

Sri Aurobindo's language has a majestic infancy as the scenes around us today are placed one upon another like building blocks to suggest the failure of so-called leaders :

“ A capital was there without a State :
It had no ruler, only groups that strove.
He saw a city of ancient Ignorance
Founded upon a soil that knew not Light
A bull-throat bellowed with its brazen tongue ;
Its hard and shameless clamour filling space
And threatening all who dared to listen to truth
Claimed the monopoly of the battered ear ;
A deafened acquiescence gave its vote,
And braggart dogmas shouted in the night ... ”

But must it always be so? Can we not prayerfully hope for a better world? Is it not darkest before dawn? Fortunately for us, both Sri Aurobindo and T. S. Eliot were deeply spiritual in their outlook. And a spiritual view is always a visionary view that is a life of light. Unlike dreams that grow out of our unconscious, visions descend from our super-conscious states of mystic experience. As the *Four Quartets* makes use of the Christian ideas of Annunciation, the Incarnation, the Passion, and the Eucharist as well as ideas from Heraclitus and the *Gita*, the poem becomes a message of hope. Eliot makes a conscious effort to rescue modern man who has been felled by a crisis of faith in a scientific and technological civilisation. Hold back for a moment from the careering, blinding life about you; teach your soul to be still to watch the vision of love, the *Vijnana* of light:

“I said to my soul, be still, and let the dark come upon you
Which shall be the darkness of God. As, in a theatre,
The lights are extinguished, for the scene to be changed
With a hallow rumble of wings, with a movement of dark-
ness on darkness

And we know that the hills and trees, the distant panorama
And the bold imposing facade are all being rolled away—
Or as, when an underground train, in the tube, stops too long
between stations

And the conversation rises and slowly fades into silence
And you see behind every face the mental emptiness deepen

Leaving only the growing terror of nothing to think about :
 Or when, under ether, the mind is conscious but conscious
 of nothing—

I said to my soul, be still, and wait without hope
 For hope would be hope for the wrong thing ; wait without
 love
 For love would be love of the wrong thing ; there is yet faith
 But the faith and the love and the hope are all in the waiting
 Wait without thought, for you are not ready for thought :
 So the darkness shall be the light, and the stillness the
 dancing. ”

After the moratorium placed on questions, after the soul has been still in the presence of the Lord's love and compassion, faith blossoms in us. So we tell ourselves : And all shall be well and / All manner of thing shall be well. ”

Sri Aurobindo, urged by his evolutionary philosophy, looks beyond the crucified body bringing us faith to the glorified body that posits hope. Such a glorified body is Savitri, after she has performed the Yoga that has ushered in the mind of light. As she begins an inner search for her soul's identity, the realisation comes to her that the Divine Mother has made her, Savitri, “the centre of a wide-drawn scheme,” the leader who would take the “blind struggling world” to light. The darkness threatening her life with Satyavan being symptomatic of the present human predicament, she would track it to its source, and master and transform it. She journeys into the inner countries of her being and gains the total power of the soul by achieving a great calm, the “Superconscient's high retreat,” and is now ready for the great struggle.

Sri Aurobindo and T. S. Eliot draw close to each other at the summits of poetic recordation. Stilling the soul is the sure way to strengthen the soul. It is no easy task, and ascent is ever difficult. But the summits should ever be our goal. Man must learn to hunger for the eternal. The earth, for all its dolorous state now, can be transformed yet. Thus Sri Aurobindo :

“ The earth shall be a field and camp of God,
 Man shall forget consent to mortality
 And his embodied frail impermanence.
 This universe shall unseal its occult sense,
 Creation's process change its antique front,
 An ignorant evolution's hierarchy
 Release the Wisdom chained below its base. ”

Therefore T. S. Eliot holds hands with Sri Aurobindo to invoke India's ancient wisdom.

“...O voyagers, O seamen,
 You who come to port, and you whose bodies
 Will suffer the trial and judgement of the sea,
 Or whatever event, this is your real destination.”
 So Krishna, as when he admonished Arjuna
 On the field of battle.
 Not fare well,
 But fare forward, voyagers.”

TWO THOUGHT MINIMS

N. S. KRISHNA MURTY

Smile over the griefs
 Laugh over the joys
 They are either or neither.
 The one is either.
 Both are neither.
 To the Knowing.

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The unknown and unknowable —
 oblivion is there
 It strikes you and you become
 aware of it
 It has a terrific and
 cavernous mouth
 It engulfs you unawares,
 When it happens, you are defeated.
 Panacea is to welcome it
 and allow it to pass off,
 It always terrifies others too,
 It terrifies you, if you are
 unaware of it!

MUHAMMAD - THE PROPHET OF ISLAM

P. RAJESWARA RAO

At present, every seventh person in the world is a Muslim. Their total population is over one hundred crores. The resounding call of Allah-o-Akbar (God is Great) rises out of the minarets five times a day from Moracco to Indonesia, from Siberia to Kerala, from Yugoslavia to China. Edward Gibbon wrote that if Muslim warriors had not been defeated at Tours in 732 A. D., the Koran instead of the Bible would be taught at Oxford and Cambridge. They are massed in a broad belt from Moracco to the Philippines. Islam, which means surrender, is the name given by Muhammad to the religion he preached. It is the youngest of the great religions of the world. Arabia, where it arose, occupies a central position in the hemisphere comprising the continents of Asia, Africa and Europe. The traditions of early Islam with its emphasis on democracy, freedom and rationalism have a continuous validity and vitality and they have effectively asserted themselves with remarkable resilience during the long history of Islam.

It was in the year 570 A. D., that Muhammad was born in Mecca, the sacred city of Arabia, where Adam settled after his expulsion from the paradise. He belonged to the noblest family of Arabia, the quaraish, who were held in high esteem. His father was Abdullah and Amina was his mother. He was born as a posthumous child and his mother too died when he was six years old. He was brought up by his grandfather and uncle. Every one was impressed by his ways and manners. His form was stately and commanding. A rich widow, Khadija, entrusted to him the sole charge of her business. They were happily married, though she was fifteen years older than him. Of his children by her, only Fatima survived, from whom sprang the progeny of Sayyids, well-known in the history of Islam.

At that time, Arabia was steeped in superstition. People were materialistic and had no moral code as such and vice

was rampant. They were disunited. From the age of forty, Muhammad began to retire to the cave of Hira often for meditation. He saw visions which he regarded as messages from God. The Quoran was revealed to him during a period of twenty-three years. The month of Ramzan, which is the holiest month in the Islamic calendar, is significant as Quoran was first revealed to Muhammad in this month. Khadija became his first convert. As he gathered adherents, persecution began. Some of them even migrated to Abyssinia. He too left for Medina in 622 A. D. The history and tradition of Islam is bound up with Hijra or the flight. Muslim era itself is reckoned from this event and it connotes the birth of Islam.

A mosque was built. He regulated prayers and provided for refugees by establishing a brotherhood between them and those who came to their help. He united the various tribes living in Medina. He preached the unsheathing of the sword in self-defence. He declared that Mecca was the holy city and proceeded there at the head of ten thousand followers. The battle of Badar he fought has long passed into legend. He became the master of Mecca and purified *Kaba* by removing all the idols therefrom. He wrote letters to the rulers of the neighbouring countries in 628 A. D., inviting them to accept Islam. On that day, the universal power of Islam was founded. Islam means quest for a correct life.

At the same time, he issued a unilateral solemn declaration of peace, friendship and good neighbourly relations with the Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians. His catholic character can be inferred from an organisation called "Ikhwantus-Safa" (the brotherhood of the pure) consisting of persons belonging to different creeds. The most misused word "Kafir" means the perverted. Such persons are found in every faith. Priests may quarrel and philosophers may argue, but it is the prophets who realise the religious truth.

As the head and founder of the Islamic Republic, he never wore a crown. He appointed no army, no police and imposed no taxes. He intended it as a perfect State subsisting on voluntary contribution Zakat (one-fortieth of one's income) for the uplift of the common man. His life was simple. He used to do manual work, milk his goats, patch his clothes and mend his shoes. He was truthful, humility personified, generous to the enemies and dispensed equal justice to all. His hospitality became proverbial. His respect for womanhood has been epitomised in the saying "Paradise lies at the feet of mother." His life was in conformity with the highest standards of morality.

He married at the age of twenty-five and he was fifty when Khadija died. His subsequent marriages, which may appear objectionable to the modern mind, were in the nature of compassion for the forlorn condition of the persons concerned, who were widows and far from being beautiful. He used to spend three-fourths of the night in prayer and in reciting portions from the Quoran.

He passed away in 632 A. D., in a hut, which later became a part of a mosque. Abu Bakar took over the inheritance and created Arabian Khilaphat (Khilafa means simply successor). Umar succeeded Abu Bakar. Then Islam spread to Syria, Palestine and Egypt. Since Umar did not name a successor, Ali, a son-in-law of the Prophet, was elected to this office. After him, the position passed on to Murawiyah. Thereafter, the Khalifa became hereditary and he was the Emperor. The Abbasides later replaced Ummayyads. Later, Usman's empire of Turkey took over the Caliphate and led the Muslim world with the exception of Shias and Moroccans. It was finally abolished by Kemal Ata Turk in 1924. Subsequent efforts to revive the institution did not succeed.

Five main duties are prescribed for every Muslim, namely, prayer (*Namaj*), Fasting (*Rosa*) during the month of Ramzan, pilgrimage to Mecca (*Haj*), Alms-giving (*Zakat*) and finally *Jihad* or the holy war is enjoined on them for the vindication of their creed. The one sacred scripture of Islam is Quoran, and its daily recitation in all the Muslim schools and mosques makes it the most widely read book in existence. It is in rhymed prose and for the most part highly rhetorical, acknowledged as a literary masterpiece unrivalled in its excellence and retaining its pristine purity. It is divided into 30 parts comprising one hundred and fourteen chapters, called *Surahs* (literally series), each ostensibly complete in itself. Few books in all human history have warmed more hearts or exercised more widespread influence than this. Anyone who examines the passages therein, which are lucid as well as deep, terse as well as epigrammatic, is bound to be impressed. The unity of God is the one great theme and it seeks to bring before man the potentialities that are hidden in him and to guide him towards the path of lasting peace. Though Islam abolished priesthood, theologians, jurists and scholars became powerful and also became advisers to kings and often interpreted Quoran.

The religion preached by Muhammad is ethical in its appeal and practical in its approach. There is absolute equality among

the brothers in faith. In all matters of private law, wife is the equal of her husband. The veiling of woman is not a religious edict, but a social custom. For example, Ayasha, the wife of the Prophet, led an army in battle. His daughter, Fatima, took an active part in disputes concerning inheritance. Islam is the creation of a single mind and is expressed in a single sentence "There is one God and Muhammad is his Prophet." It evidently borrowed its idea from Judaism, its dogmatism in asterism from Christianity, its philosophy from Greece and its mysticism from India and Alexandria. It created a unified culture, law, language, religion, economic forms and social standards. It embraces a wealth of races, the idea of oneness of humanity, with peace as the basis, is the contribution of Muhammad to human heritage.

METAMORPHOSIS

Dr. MOIN QAZI

I watched the pretty girl grow
A cute face with cheeks aglow
Cuddled by brothers and parents
Those were her finest moments.
Laughing, playing, singing, dancing.
Every moment of life spent relaxing
No tensions to wrinkle her face
No bondage to break her grace

But what a metamorphosis
the marriage struck !

A tense, trembling, daughter-in-law
The world as infant she never saw
The forehead covered under her saree's veil
Life has now made her kneel
Gone is the glow, the sweet smile
stored coolly in her memory's file,
A mournful world opens before her eyes
Built on the sour marriage ties.

THE PIGEONS' RETURN

Dr. B. GOPALA REDDY

The mango-grove is in smiles aflower,
Its joy swelling out in fruitlets taking shape.
The summer heat has not yet begun,
And its trumpet-sounds are heard
Near the seasoned grove of spring.
It was past noon that day when I called at her house.
It was after an interval fairly long.
I accosted her :
"Here have I brought you a present strange
What you cannot guess and what you do not expect".
Her curiosity was aflush.
And she looked at me with questioning eyes.
I replied :
"Don't you be baffled.
It is the pouch of your own letters
Written to me with soothing sweetness
Ranging over several months and years too.
Not in a huff are they brought back,
Nor in displeasure or discard.
They are letters, dripping ecstasy
Wafting a perfume of friendly well-being,
Letters which I have read and re-read with joy,
Which I have stored as a precious treasure,
Which I possessed and owned as mine.
To my progeny they are naught,
Of no value to them at all.
They will not sense
The proximity, affection, and joy inhered therein.
The one who received and the one who wrote
They two know the invaluable worth thereof.
The pigeons you despatched
Have returned to your house at long last.

Like the musical-note in ascent
 Making a side-jump and landing on the Pallavi.
 Cherished in your bosom
 Nourished with affection
 Blossoming and bursting with perfume
 The flower-garlands their freshness ebbing with time
 Are back in your lap to rest asleep.
 Born in friendship
 Wafting perfumes of entwining thoughts
 Not losing their values
 But redoubled in original worth
 Have the pigeons returned.
 They need a refuge, a sanctuary.
 Our association was marked
 By earnestness and accord and mutual regard.
 On the hill-tops of honour have we moved
 The white clouds of our affectionate regard
 Were not dyed red with erotic passion.
 The horizon of our minds was full
 With the white light of friendship unsullied.
 The pure elemental identity
 Nourished our friendship.
 Association of man and woman
 Has been narrowed by a sexy touch in our society.
 Social outlook has narrowed the bounds of that felicity.
 The branches of our friendship had never a downward descent
 You are not my sister,
 Nor my beloved.
 Affection untouched by selfishness
 Has brought us close together.
 Lower desires there were none in our minds.
 Domineering thoughts never took shape
 Between us nothing to give, nothing to receive
 Except the perfume of two minds aflower
 The pleasing note of your letters
 Was echoed by my mind.
 I waited for the advent of your letters
 Like the toiling peasant in drought for the advent of rain.
 Your letters again and again I read in leisurely mood
 Pausing and pausing and mind meandering
 The garden of my mind was swayed
 With the happy breeze of perfumed thoughts.
 It was like the sweet sound of a flute from afar
 It was like the call of Venus reflected

In the shining waters of a stream at dawn,
 Pleasantries we exchanged.
 Small triumphs and smaller defeats we gladly acknowledged
 We never used words rash or harsh, hot or sharp.
 We were never insistent.
 Concealed praise there may have been.
 Our hosting was full of sweets and savoury marginal.
 Our darts were not tart and turned out to be flowers.
 The creepers of our letters spread
 Within the bounds of the garden of letters,
 From the theme of rural merriment
 To the classic legend of Radha in love
 There was coverage in our letters.
 Personal experiences and description
 Of delightful scenes surveyed
 Took on the sandal paste of ineffable joy.
 There was jingle of poetic ornament.
 There was the nectar of uncomprehended emotion.
 Our letters constitute a chapter of Rasa
 In the Kavya of our life,
 Like the Sundara segment in the Ramayana epic
 With no prologue and no epilogue.
 I do not think I received letters from any other
 So many nor so vivacious
 Nor so full of emotion in language soft and sweet,
 The years of our acquaintance may be few.
 But the swing of our affection was great
 On the waves of sweetness, not cloying.
 Your silent face asks the question:
 "Why then are you returning these letters".
 In the lake-waters of the heart
 Swings this question like a lotus-bud.
 Harken to my reply with sympathy and understanding
 You are far younger than I.
 When, leaving the earthly-nest, this bird has gone
 Aloft to the unknown vacant skies at the beckoning of stars
 And the age gap is filled to your outliving years,
 You may lay your hands on one of these letters
 And read it a while
 And recalled to your mind this close friend who is begone.
 If any little shred of perfume still abides
 Out of the plenty that filled the heart at one time,
 You may hear as in a whisper
 The anklet-jingle of a bygone past.

I know how wonderful is time,
 How savage and how merciless.
 It wipes out all images good and bad
 It heals the painful wounds of sorrow.
 The flowers of joy it withers.
 It swamps out the heat of day
 And blows out the lamps of joy.
 If time had not the healing power
 What would have become of mankind ?
 In the flames of sorrow, it would surely have perished
 When a man falls to the ground
 It is time that removes the dust and makes him rise again.
 Time's merciful hand does what a thousand heavenly
 physicians may do.
 It is time that kills.
 It is time that keeps us alive.
 Time is our protective armour.
 In days to come
 In some leisure hour,
 If in the garden of memory, any saplings of friendship remains
 Peruse a letter or two
 Whether on a summer-eve
 Or a cloud-laden rainy day
 Or an autumnal night
 Read a letter or two.
 See if old memories can stir you and wake you up.
 If that power is gone
 Then push away this pouch
 Throw away the letters
 Tear them and burn them
 Throw the whole heap into the Bhogi-flames
 What are these letters to others but a waste heap.
 Lifeless paper and dried up ink.
 I give back your letters unto you.
 With Ganga water, Ganga worship I perform.
 Keep them for a time with forbearance.
 May God bless you.
 So saying, I rose.
 A tear-drop fell on the pouch of letters.
 With a heavy heart
 And a light hand
 I moved out of her house in the afternoon sun.
 At the gate the mango-blossom fell on me shedding its
 flower-dust.

THE GROWTH OF ENGLISH POETIC DRAMA

K. SUMANA

The English poetic drama had its hey day during the Elizabethan age. The University Wits, in general, and Marlowe and Shakespeare, in particular, contributed their mite to the growth and development of poetic drama. With the tremendous influence of the Renaissance, Marlowe poetised the Elizabethan drama. He breathed into English drama the life spirit of poetry through his "Mighty line". Shakespeare, the master dramatist, gave a touch of perfection to the poetic drama especially through his tragedies like *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth* and *King Lear* and his tragi-comedies like *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* which are notable for their poetic excellence.

Shakespeare took drama to such poetic heights that none of his successors could continue it with the same spirit and vigour. After Shakespeare, only in Webster, particularly in his *The Dutchess of Malfi*, do we find almost perfect touches of poetic drama. Nevertheless, we may say that poetic drama died a natural death with Shakespeare.

No doubt, both the Romantic and the Victorian poets attempted poetic drama during the 19th century. Importantly, Keats, Shelly and Tennyson made a sincere attempt to revive Shakespearean poetic drama. But, as Mathew Arnold rightly points out, they lacked the "architectonics" of drama. Hence their failure to produce genuine poetic drama which is at once poetic and dramatic.

Poetic drama was revived only at the beginning of the 20th century and reached a sense of perfection in the hands of T. S. Eliot and Christopher Fry. English poetic dramatists like Stephen Phillips, John Masefield, John Drinkwater, Lascelles Abercrombie and Bottomley and the Irish poetic dramatists like Lady Gregory, W. B. Yeats and J. M. Synge paved the way for Eliot's more creative and fruitful efforts, theoretical

as well as practical, for "planting poetic drama on the stage to touch the heart and mould the thought of the public".¹

Stephen Phillips was hailed as "the saviour of modern poetic drama" by some critics. But other critics like A. C. Ward are of the view that Phillip's poetic drama has little true poetry or true drama. He only encouraged other writers and led to further experiments in poetic drama. His plays "exposed the limitations of pseudo-Elizabethan blank verse, and led poets to seek another medium".²

Masefield experimented widely and adopted many devices of the classical and the Japanese Noh drama and thus became one of the pioneers in the revival of modern poetic drama. But his verse with its "artless simplicity" sometimes seems too studied and self-conscious to be dramatically effective. John Drinkwater entered the dramatic field as a champion of imaginative verse drama in simple style and brought out the most popular play, *Abraham Lincoln*. His plays are remarkable for their human appeal and their intensity of passion.

Abercrombie and Bottomley have a greater significance in the development of English poetic drama before T. S. Eliot. For, they made a more successful attempt than Masefield and Drinkwater to solve the crucial problem of the medium appropriate to poetic drama. Abercrombie, in his essay on *The Function of Poetry in Drama*, claimed the superiority of poetic drama over the prose drama. According to him, poetic drama deals with the core and Kernal of life — "life intensified" whereas prose drama is confined to the "eternal shell of reality." What he professed in theory, he practised in his plays like *Deborah*, *The End of the World*, *The Deserter* and *The Phoenix*. Despite his lively interest in the theatre and his keen desire to revive poetic drama which could penetrate into the dark depth of the human heart and paint its drives and impulses in vivid terms, he failed chiefly because he was "more of a poet than a dramatist."

Bottomley followed a different line of development of poetic drama by cultivating the lyrical element in his poetry which resulted in the production of choral plays like *Mid-Summer Eve*. He revolted against the naturalistic stage with its focus on the surface of life and sought "to cultivate the unrealistic poetic drama, remote from the actual humdrum human existence and capable of expressing the voice and grace of the soul".³ Naturally, his plays, like Shelly's and Tagore's, are more lyrical than dramatic, fit not for large audience but for small, interested body of listeners.

W. B. Yeats played a key role in the revival of modern poetic drama both as a theorist and a practitioner of the democratic

craft. Naturally opposed to the modern commercial theatre, Yeats endeavoured to revive a poetic drama capable of stirring the heart and liberating the soul with symbolic scenery. In his crucial essay, *The Tragic Theatre*, he describes the prose play as an image of the common, mundane existence, as distinguished from the larger life of poetry where human nature escapes the limits of time and space.

In his long dramatic career, Yeats went on making experiments. But, as John Gassner points out, "There is always a breach between ambition and attainment".⁴ He deviated from the path he had struck out in his early plays and adopted the Japanese Noh technique. The adoption of a foreign form precluded the possibility of its naturalization on the English stage, and, what is more, its symbolic and allusive nature placed it beyond the comprehension of the popular audience. Thus, as William Sharp has justly remarked, Yeats's "own views on the public theatre precluded his success"⁵ as a dramatist.

It is T. S. Eliot who steadily moved towards the popular theatre to make poetic drama a source of moral and spiritual uplift of the secular audience. Eliot was fully convinced of the greatness of poetic drama as well as of the "permanent craving" for it implanted in human nature, yet he was equally alive to the great difficulties lying in the way of its realisation. The problem before him was two-fold — avoidance of Shakespearian versification and bridging of gulf between the language of poetry and the living speech of the people in the contemporary society.

Eliot's greatness lies in solving this naughty problem by creating a poetic drama which is at once poetic and realistic. First of all, Eliot was quite clear of the nature of poetic drama and its difference from the prose drama. He rightly observes :

What distinguishes poetic drama from prosaic drama is a kind of doubleness in action, as if it took place on two planes at once.⁶

Eliot emphasises the organic nature of poetic drama, where poetry is not only an integral part, but is also strictly subordinated to the purposes of the drama.

Eliot was very well aware of the necessity of discovery of a medium fit for the poetic drama he was striving to create for the theatre of his age. The matter is put in a nutshell by one of the speakers in *A Dialogue of Dramatic Poetry* :

We must find a new form of verse which shall be as satisfactory a vehicle as blank verse was for the Elizabethans.⁷

Avoiding any echo of Shakespeare, Eliot preferred the versification of *Everyman*. He did not want to write in high style and in the manner of heroic drama. His task was Wordsworthian—"a return to everyday speech, a shearing of the decorative pictorial and static elements".⁸

With this aim in view, Eliot set to work and succeeded in discovering a flexible medium for his first great play, *Murder in the Cathedral*. Poetry is a prominent feature in this play, and especially in the choral songs it attains splendour and stateliness appropriate to the lofty sentiment inherent in the spiritual theme -- martyrdom.

In his next play, *The Family Reunion*, Eliot selects a secular story with a modern setting and characters, dealing with the theme of sin and expiation. Its verse is flexible and transparent. Yet, poetic passages rich in lyricism and imagery abound in the play which remains a remarkable poetic composition.

In the plays that follow *The Family Reunion*, namely, *The Cocktail Party*, *The Confidential Clerk* and *The Elder Statesman*, there is undoubtedly a growing awareness of the common, everyday life. Yet, Eliot fails to make a convincing treatment of the everyday life and its human agents because of his pre-occupation with a spiritual message, his distant emotion and his endeavour to make his verse as transparent as prose. In the absence of emotional appeal, Eliot's transparent poetry in his later plays almost borders on bald prose. *The Elder Statesman* is a logical end of the development of poetic drama. In his *Poetry and Drama* Eliot says that "no play should be written in verse for which prose is dramatically adequate." Perhaps, there is nothing in *The Elder Statesman* that could not be done in prose.

The last poetic dramatist is Christopher Fry, a master of eloquence. He is inspired by the noble aim of exploring the mystery of human life where God is not merely a sleeping partner, by means of comedy which he believed to be a good handmaiden of serious spiritual drama.

The most remarkable quality of Fry's verse is its perfect suitability to the requirements of the theatre. It is fluent and flowing. It is free from poetic tricks such as inversion and ellipsis. Above all, it is progressive in movement. It can come down to colloquial level and then rise to lyrical intensity without the least trace of strain or effort. However, critics like Marius Bewley complain that Fry's rhythm is not dramatic in that it does not convey the sense of a speaking voice, nor is it pliant to the shifts and turns of mood or emotion.⁹

Poetry is the chief motive force of Fry's genius. His muse sustains itself mainly on the sound, colour and pomp of verse. His most successful play, *A Phoenix Too Frequent* has simplicity and spark of liveliness. As a true poetic drama it is as successful as Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*.

To conclude, the prospect of poetic drama is not very encouraging in view of the rapid growth of mass entertainment like cinema, radio and television which have jeopardised the very existence of the theatre, in general, and of the poetic theatre, in particular. So, the survival of poetic drama in our prosaic age will depend largely upon its capacity to adapt itself to the unfavourable circumstances created by hostile forces. Let us, however, hope that poetic drama will survive in its own right and by its own strength as a bulwark against forces which tend to desiccate and degrade the human heart. Let us be convinced that the poetic drama, as practised by Yeats, Eliot and Fry, is one of the best instruments for arresting the rot which is eating into the vitals of the human heart and mind at present.

NOTES

1. K. S. MISRA : *Twentieth Century English Poetic Drama* (New Delhi : Vikas, 1981), p. 2.
2. A. C. WARD : *Twentieth Century English Literature* (Delhi, 1974), p. 94.
3. K. S. MISRA : *Twentieth Century English Poetic Drama*, (New Delhi : Vikas, 1981), Pp. 14,15.
4. JOHN GASSNER : Introduction, *Playwrights on Playwriting : The Meaning and Making of Modern Drama From Ibsen to Ionesco*. (New York, 1977), p. xi.
5. WILLIAM L. SHARP : " W. B. Yeats : A Poet Not in the Theatre ", *The Tulane Drama Review*, IV, 2, 1959, p. 67.
6. T. S. ELIOT : *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* (London, 1964), p. 153
7. T. S. ELIOT : *Selected Essays* (London : 1951), p. 57.
8. JOSEPH CHIARI : *The Landmarks of Contemporary Drama*
9. MARIUS BEWLEY : " The Verse of Christopher Fry " *Scrutiny*, XVII, (1951), p. 84.

SWATHI THIRUNAL

The Composer and the Choreographer

M. K. K. NAYAR

Maharaja Swathi Thirunal was a rare genius. It would be difficult to find a parallel. Like all such men of extraordinary genius, he also passed away in his early 'Thirties. Erudite scholar, enviable linguist, rare aesthete, builder of vision, administrator of varied dimensions, connoisseur of everything artistic, and above all a great poet and composer, Swathi Thirunal compressed into his short span of life some of the most magnificent achievements of human capability, as generations after him wonder at his miraculous achievements. Scholars have despaired at the great heights of glory he had reached.

Swathi Thirunal, who was born into a family with justifiable pride of ancestry, was educated by a galaxy of scholars and aided by the best private library of the South available in his own palace. Swathi Thirunal had mastered Sanskrit, English, Persian, Hindustani, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil and Kannada in addition to his mother-tongue, Malayalam, at the early age of 16, when he ascended the throne and became Maharaja Swathi Thirunal.

With all the administrative talent available around him, one can imagine the plight of a 16 year old lad, when placed in charge as the ruler of a State, faced with many problems — social, political and financial. History has recorded that during his reign he had handled those problems with the sagacity of a far more mature man of wisdom and administrative experience. Being an avid reader and lover of books, he built the Government Press and organised both the public library and the manuscript library. Although a great scholar and poet in his own right, he is remembered more as a composer of music and the choreographer of Mohiniattam, the indigenous dance form of Kerala. Swathi Thirunal also composed hundreds of lasting works in poetry and music. His Sanskrit works other than musical

compositions include *Bhaktimanjari* a devotional poem consisting of 101 *Slokas*; *Syanandoorapura Varnanam*, describing the city of Trivandrum and the reigning deity Sri Padmanabha Swamy; *Sri Padmanabha Satakam*, another devotional poem in praise of Lord Padmanabha; *Ajamilopakhyana* and *Kuchelopakhyana* two musical pieces for Harikatha performances; *Utsava Varnana Prabandham*, describing the temple festival of Sri Padmanabha Swamy; an introduction to *Anyopadesa Sataka*. Another lasting work of his is a discourse on the various *Praasas* used in poetry particularly, the *Moolanupraasa* and the *Antyaakhshara Praasa*.

Swathi Thirunal composed over 500 songs. But so far we have been able to get only 313 of them. There is a common belief that his signature "Padmanabha" is there in all his works. That is not true. There are many compositions of Swathi Thirunal which do not contain that signature. Of the songs that are available, 197 are in Sanskrit, 63 in Malayalam, 37 in Hindustani, 8 in Telugu and one in Kannada. In addition he has also composed 5 Tillanas. He has used with eclat rare Ragas like Poorvakamodari, Suddhabhairavi, Dyujaavanti, Lalita-Panchaka, Maalavi and Gopika Vasanta. Some of these however were popular in the Kathakali literature which was there before him. His Hindustani compositions include Drumat, Khayal, Tumri, Gazal and Taranas. He also adopted from Marathi, Ragas like Saki, Bhindi, Ovi, Panchachamaera and Kakavali. His Kirtanas are all devotional, mostly addressed to his family deity Sri Padmanabha. Of the 188 Kirtanas composed by him 150 are in Sanskrit, 37 in Hindustani and one in Kannada.

So far we have found 65 Padas composed by him for Bharatanatyam and Mohiniattam. 50 of them are in Malayalam, 10 in Sanskrit and 5 in Telugu. He has also composed 19 Chaukavarnas and 2 Tanavarnas. Of the 19 Chaukavarnas 17 are in Sanskrit, one in Telugu and one in Malayalam. Both the Tanavarnas are in Telugu. Every composition of Swathi Thirunal is distinguished by the choice of the most appropriate words, a regal flow of poetry and a very enjoyable musical quality. When you start singing a composition of his, the intrinsic feature of the Raga gets expounded in the very first line. Being a good musician himself, he could bring into his works a rare content that any musicologist would envy.

Swathi Thirunal was to an extent a contemporary of the great musical composers Tyagarajaswami, Muthuswamy Deekshitar and Shyama Sastry. While Swathi Thirunal died at the age of 34 in 1847, Tyagarajaswami outlived him by a year and died

at the age of 88 in 1848. Muthuswamy Deekshitar died at the age of 60 in 1835 when the Maharaja was 22 years old. Shyama Sastri died at the age of 64 in 1827 when the Maharaja was only 14. At the time of Swathi Thirunal the most popular compositions in Karnatic music were no doubt those of Tyagarajaswami. There is reason to believe that the Maharaja was to an extent inspired by Tyagarajaswami's compositions which were also dedicated to Rama, an Avataara of Sri Padmanabha.

During the period of Tyagaraja and the other great composers we do not find any significant musical compositions in Tamil. The only one that attracted spontaneous attention was Nandanar Charitam, by Gopalakrishna Bharat. It is significant that we have not so far been able to locate a single song, Kirtana or Pada by Maharaja Swathi Thirunal composed in Tamil. He too must have felt, like his great contemporaries, the inadequacy of the Tamil alphabet. Much later Pattanam Subramanya Iyyar, Bharatiyar, Papanasam Sivan and others have composed delightful songs in Tamil.

The Maharaja's unique concept of the aesthetics of various Ragas are clearly seen in his famous Navaratri Kritis. He has chosen the Raga with particular ease to be in tune with the mood or Sankalpa of the Mother in each Kirti. Thus his Devi Jagajjanani is in Sankaraabharana, Pahimaam Sri Vageeswari in Kalyani, Devi Paavane in Saaveri, Bharati Maamava in Thodi, Janani Paahisada in Suddhasaaveri, Paahi Janani in Naatakuranji and Paahi Parvatanandini in Aarabhi.

The beginning of the 19th century was the golden age of Thanjavoor. That was the time when the famous Thanjavoor quartet, Ponnayya, Chinnayya, Shivanandam and Vadivelu, the Nattuvanars of Dasiyattam, emerged as the saviours of our national heritage, the Bharatanatyam which had decayed through centuries of sensuality when the leaders of society were more interested in the artists than in the art form. By their effort Bharatanatyam recaptured its classical stature and its remarkable beauty. Like Dasiyattam in Tamil Nadu, Mohiniattam of Kerala had, over the centuries, undergone considerable decay. When the Maharaja learnt that the degenerated Dasiyattam had been revitalised and recreated into an exquisite Bharatanatyam, the creative genius in him was roused. It was Swathi Thirunal who gave a total tilt to the music of Mohiniattam. Before his time, the music was set to pure Sopaana style. Swathi Thirunal more or less replaced it with an emphasis on the Carnatic style.

In the court of Swathi Thirunal there was a galaxy of scholars, poets and artists. They included Kunju Krishna

Pothuval, Haripattu Kochupillai Varyar, Rama Varyar, Mysore Simhadri Sastry, Kumbhakonam Vasudevachari, Choladesam Ksheerabddhi Sastry, Sankaranath Josyar and above all, Ananda Padmanabha Goswamy, famous as Meru Swamy, the legendary exponent of Harikatha. The Maharaja utilized the presence of these courtiers to develop his knowledge of different languages and to appreciate their nuances so that he could compose music in those languages with mastery.

The last few years of Swathi Thirunal were years of mental agony and distress to the Maharaja. Due to intrigues and increasing interference of Gen. Cullen, the British Resident, in the internal affairs of the administration, the Maharaja became despondent and slowly withdrew from his administrative responsibilities. Though it was most unfortunate for the state administration, like the curse of Urvashi, it was indeed a boon to music lovers. Those were the moments when the Maharaja sought refuge at the feet of Sri Padmanabha, and some of his most melodious songs like *Saarasaaakshaparipaalayamaam* in Pantuvarali came out on such occasions in unpremeditated strains of profound sorrow and sweetness.

Swathi Thirunal spread his rays of kindness and glory like the sun on everyone around him. They, indeed, like the moon, did enjoy the splendour of that bounteous glory.

LOVE FOR SHADOWS

Dr. KULWANT SINGH GILL

Phenomenal forms

Moving

Under the phoenix sun

Unreal

Like the silhouettes

Thrown by

Undimensional light

On the vacant walls of a cavern dark

Are as real and dear to me

As shadows

To the man in the cave

Blinking at the radiant disc

From the far end of

His dark abode.

INDIA AND EUROPE *

An Essay in Philosophical Understanding

B. S. L. HANUMANTA RAO

Since almost the dawn of history there had been racial movements and material and cultural exchanges between the East and the West, especially Europe and India. The two Sanskrit words *kirata* (merchant) and *Paulastya* (family of Ravana of the *Ramayana*) are believed to have been derived from two of the Mediterranean peoples — Cretans and Palaesgians — both of whom were expert sea-farers. The fascination of the Classical Greece for India prompted the adventures of Alexander the Great and modern Germany produced a host of Indologists who undertook keen hermeneutical study of India's cultural heritage. With that native background, Wilhelm Halbfass, German Professor of Indian Philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania, is fully equipped and qualified for an exposition of the encounter between Europe and India, and the result is his book *India and Europe — An Essay in Philosophical Understanding*.

The book was originally written in German under the title *Inden und Europa* which the author himself has translated into English, having revised and updated. The book is not a mere "dry as dust" historical narration of the encounter between the two lands but deals with images, projections, theoretical responses and reflections in a comprehensive and scholarly fashion with an underlying sympathetic but critical appraisal and appreciation. However some of the comments of the author and other European thinkers may sound offending to the nascent spirit of Hindu nationalism but they really merit serious thought and consideration. Real patriotism lies not in an unqualified glorification of one's own past and blind hero-worship but in detecting the oppressive dead-wood in one's heritage and finding ways of clearing it in the interests of speedy progress.

* *India and Europe — An Essay in Philosophical Understanding* : By Wilhelm Halbfass. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers P. Ltd., New Delhi-7. Price : Rs. 225.

The book under review is in two parts : the earlier dealing with European reaction to Indian thought till about the 19th century and the second with Indian reaction to the Western impact in the modern period.

The sources available to the Europeans about India are incomplete and imperfect throughout and more so in the remote Classical Age. Basing on the accounts of visitors like Skylax and Megasthenes, 6th and 4th centuries B. C., respectively, India was looked upon by the Greeks as a land of fabulous wealth and mysterious ascetics. Still, unspoilt by regional chauvinism, the Greeks held India in high esteem as the original home of thought and learning *par excellence*. Though Pythagorus is believed to have coined the word philosophy, he is said to have studied psychological and soteriological doctrines with the Indian Sramanas. Later, each of the Western philosophers understood and interpreted the Indian thought according to his own ideological framework — rational, romantic, idealist or materialist — depending mostly on the accounts of Islamic writers, Christian missionaries and coloured administrative reports of colonial rulers.

It is indeed a paradox that Islam sprang up almost at the close of the Classical Age as a wedge between Europe and India but served also as a bridge between the two as Europe could learn about India only through the Muslim writers. The first important Muslim writer is Al-Biruni whose *Kitab'ul Hind* is more authentic than Classical Accounts as the author acquainted himself with original Sanskrit sources. Al-Biruni was open-minded and even sympathetic towards the Hindus. He could find monotheism in the Hindu concept of *Isvara* and uniconic system in the early Upanishadic thought. But he compared Hinduism to diamonds mixed up with dung and remarked that the Hindus hold both in equal reverence. He found out and lamented that the Hindus were (are) ethnocentric (conceited) and that was the cause of their fall. Al-Biruni notes several systems of Indian thought but nowhere he refers to Sankara's Advaita, probably because it did not gain popularity by his time (A. D. 973-1048). The *Kitab-al-Milal* of Shahrastani (1086-1153) was more popular than Al-Biruni's work. Shahrastani holds the Arabs, Persians, Greeks and Hindus as very important peoples in the history of religious and philosophical thought, but he gives credit to Pythagorean Greece as the birthplace of philosophy.

Christian missionaries started pouring into India when the Mughals were at the height of their power, following the discovery of the Cape Route (1497). The Jessuits and other Missionaries, no doubt, made a sincere effort at the study of

the Indian systems of thought. But they were sent to India to destroy heathenism and not to appreciate and preach it in Christendom. Naturally, therefore, missionary approach to the Indian thought is characterised by airs of superiority, reflected in dogmatism and fanaticism. Very frequently, they proclaimed that Hinduism represents religion in infancy and Christianity its fulfilment. Robert Nobili actually invited Brahmins to become his disciples to rediscover the lost meaning of Veda. J. Bouchet characterised the Veda as "Moses using the medium of Sanskrit." Urquhart says that Vedanta is the preparation for Christianity, whereas J. N. Farquhar would have us believe that Christianity is *The Crown of Hinduism* (the title of his book). While such discussions were going on, the Asiatic Society of Bengal was established (1784) and much of Sanskrit literature was translated for the benefit of Europe. The translations are no doubt sincerely and truly literal but it is doubtful whether they could convey the spirit behind the works and could relive the socio-cultural milieu of which they were the products. Even MaxMueller, who is held in high esteem for his services in discovering and proclaiming to the world the forgotten glories of India's cultural heritage, is said to have kept constantly at heart the aim of finding out the elements common to Veda and Bible so that the proselytizing activity of the Christian missionaries could be facilitated. The administrative reports were prepared by the British officers with the arrogant misconception that nothing can be great in the culture of a conquered people. Halbfass totally ignores these reports which formed an important source of information all over Europe.

Such was the confusing picture of Indian thought which was assessed differently by different schools. Being strong critics of the doctrine and discipline of Christianity, the rationalists found an alternative in Veda which represented to them as the oldest and purest form of religion. Voltaire, a typical representative of the Age of Enlightenment, declared "the holy Christian religion is solely based upon the ancient religion of Brahma." The Romanticists, Herder and Schlegel, too idealised the Indian tradition, but being faithfully Christian, held the view that man might have originated in Asia but attained adulthood in the Mediterranean lands, namely Greece.

Hegel, who continues to exert influence on human thought as the founder of the idealist school of history as the record of man's progress, is a strong critic of the romanticists' assessment of Indian thought. For him philosophy *par excellence* was

born and developed in Greece and Greece alone. In India religion and philosophy are inseparable and hence there is no intellectual freedom essential for the growth of philosophy. *Moksha*, the cornerstone of Indian religio-philosophical thought, is a negative concept leading to self-negation, instead of to self-assertion — finite losing itself in the infinite. "In other words, the absolute and the infinite is not put to work in and for the relative and finite; and the relative and finite does not affect the infinite and hence there is no possibility for historical progress towards the enhancement of man and the world." In the present context of India's struggle to move forward, Hegel's assessment of Indian philosophy rooted in the concept of changelessness merits consideration (During the days of anti-cow-slaughter agitation, an American economist remarked that India moves forward with her head turned backwards!) but it is undeniable that Hegel's views are based upon incomplete and biased accounts of Indian thought. Halbfass rightly points out that Hegel did not see the discussions between Buddhists and Hindus. Nor was he aware of the great intellectual ferment of the pre-Buddhist epoch when in the words of Rhys Davids there was unparalleled intellectual freedom, encouraged by the local rulers. It may further be pointed out that Hegel did not properly assess the philosophical importance of the *Vaisesika* and *Barhaspatya* systems nor the significance of the rejection of *atma* by Buddha and his comparison of *Dharma* (Law) to *Chakra* (wheel), which symbolises motion or progress. The writings of Karl Marx, as Halbfass finds out, are mere journalistic exercises and suffer from all the above defects. Marx doubted whether India with its stagnant socio-economic system, centering round the idealised rural self-sufficiency, is capable of progressive thought. Under Hegelian influence, India was excluded from the history of philosophy. Soon Hegel came under severe criticism by Schopenhauer who goes into raptures about the Indian spiritual thought and its ennobling influence. Following him, there were intensified Indological studies and the resulting discoveries exposed the imperfections in the Hegelian views. After a discussion of the terms *darsana* and *anviksiki*, frequently used in Indian Texts, Halbfass comes to the conclusion that the existence of philosophy in India is no longer doubted and much of the intellectual activity in India conforms to what European philosophers were engaged in.

This brings us to the second part of the book, dealing with the Indian reaction to Europe. It is rather strange that but for a short appreciation of the Hellenic knowledge of astronomy by Varahamihira in his *Brihatsamhita*, Indian literature is almost silent about the Greco-Roman civilization from

which India has drawn considerably (calendar, dramaturgy, coinage, etc.). This situation has prompted Halbfass to endorse the view of Al-Biruni that the Indians do not recognise the outside world. Still, it is an interesting fact of her history that whenever she encounters a vigorous foreign culture, India experiences an intellectual ferment and in the modern period Rammohan Roy was the harbinger of such a movement. Halbfass gives the correct picture of Rammohan when he describes him as a person who has placed the tensions between the origins and decay, between the past and the present at the focal point of his thought and activity, who faces the European as the interpreter of India's past and simultaneously as the representative of the living present and one who has enabled India to shake off its ancestral inertia and proceed to a new stage of religious and philosophical consciousness. Waging a crusade against all that is putrified in Hindu system, Rammohan endeavoured to bridge the gulf between precept and practice and guide Hinduism into the open arena of the wide world. He was thus the Maker of Modern India in more than one sense. To describe the movement of which Rammohan was the Morning Star, Halbfass rightly uses the term neo-Hinduism in preference to the widely popular word renaissance. Renaissance was the movement in which Europe freed herself from the shackles of organised religion and made rationalism and humanism as the keynote of their enterprise and achievement on which the modern world of science, technology and secular democracy is built. On the other hand the leaders of the Indian movement find everything great, noble and progressive, including the latest marvels of technology and the key to world peace only in Hinduism — represented by Veda (*Samhita*) for Dayananda and by Vedanta (*Upanishads*) for Vivekananda. Vedic primitivism is the ideal state of Nature for Dayananda and he exhorts the Hindus to retreat to it. The observation of Halbfass that the work of Vivekananda "does not offer any really worthwhile tasks for historical research or philosophical reflection.....the tangible historical and practical success which Vivekananda met with may be questionable..." is a challenge posed at the growing orthodoxy in Hinduism. It is to be further investigated (i) whether Vivekananda's effort to develop Hinduism into a missionary religion is to kill its spirit of catholicity for which it has been acclaimed all along and (ii) whether his call for *Universal Vedanta* is the Hindu counterpart of much despised imperialist slogan of "Whiteman's Burden".

This eagerness for self-assertion is an undeniable result of India's encounter with the West. Karl Marx was of the view

that British imperialism rendered signal service by pushing India out of centuries old stagnation, whereas the British historian Persival Spear wrote that the Indian national spirit was the result of inspiration and irritation — both provided by the Westerner. Indians derived inspiration from the knowledge of their glorious past, unfolded by European Indologists and irritation from the vituperative Christian missionary propaganda and the administrative policy of racial discrimination. This self-assertion, whether by Vivekananda or by Sri Aurobindo or by Gandhiji or by Radhakrishnan is in the Western medium and technique and the Indian culture is sought to be reinterpreted with reference to Western categories. Not only intellectual activity but the entire life of the nation is dominated by science, technology and politico-economic ideas and institutions of European origin. The process is not limited to India. Entire world is face to face with it, Endorsed therefore by Indian writers like J. L. Mehta, Halbfass concludes that Europeanisation of the earth is inevitable and inescapable.

Three Appendices under the title *Illustrations and Reflections* form the third part of the book.

The book is a valuable contribution to the clear understanding of the East-West Encounter. A critical understanding of the book is highly rewarding. The publishers deserve congratulations for having brought it out.

LONESOMENESS

R. P. CHADDAH

Conscious of curling emotions
Like a cloak I wear loneliness
around the coils of my soul
and experience a private pain.
Soaked in fond longings
mirroring some inward equipoise
I blissfully submerge in
the falling drops of pain.

BOOK REVIEWS

Buddhist Precept and Practice : By Richard F. Gombrich. Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi-7. Price : Rs. 275.

Of all the countries in South East Asia where Buddhist religion is practised, Sri Lanka is considered to be the custodian of pure teaching, Theravada, which is older than the presently popular Mahayana of the northern countries. The author of the present thesis examines how far this belief is correct. For this purpose he has paid a number of visits to the island, consulted many academics and leaders of thought. He has also interviewed a large number of monks apart from members of the laity.

He points out that the ideal of *pratyekabuddha*, individual achievement of Nirvana, has appeal only to the higher grade of practitioners. The discipline it involves is too strenuous for the common folk. The result is they have slid into a religion in the name of the Buddha which holds visions of paradise for those who are reasonably righteous in their living. They worship local gods and have their own system of ethical adjustment. Even among the monks theory and practice are different.

In his systematic account of the Ceylonese people, the author gives their history and the geography of their land in detail. He examines to what extent the religion of the invaders from the West has made inroads in the traditional heritage. Was Buddha a man or God? Did he come to Ceylon and establish a following? What is the role of the primitive religion of spirits and godlings in the personal life of the country? These are some of the pointed questions that the author raises and seeks the answers from the rural areas.

The author has a racy style and keeps the reader interested. His approach is sympathetic and his conclusions are broadly acceptable.

M. P. PANDIT

Astrological Key in Mahabharata (The New Era): By Paule Lerner. Motilal Banarsidass, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi-110 007. Price: Rs. 120.

Paule Lerner who authored this amazing book, found many similarities and correspondence between the names of the characters in the epic and those of the astronomical and celestial bodies. With this key she unlocked the doors of the citadel of the epic, entered into the depths thereof, examined every nook and corner with an astrological lens, of incisive and searching talent, and came to the conclusion that the celebrated battle, in all its phases and with all the heroes and characters male and female involved, was but an echo of an ongoing combat between celestial and demonic beings, through their terrestrial incarnation and as a projection of siderial phenomena, whose appearance at a pivotal moment in the course of time, constitutes a threat to the ancient tradition.

The author opines that the epic as we have it is a composition of many writers of different times. Apart from the astrological readings, main features of all characters, physical and psychological, are delineated in their true colours, with explanations wherever necessary. Main story from beginning to end is also presented. The first two chapters out of the thirty-one deal with the principles of Astronomy, Precession and symbolism of the Precessional Eras. These two chapters and a zodiacal chart enable an ordinary reader also to understand the subject to a great extent. The book is self-recommendatory.

B. K. SASTRY

Sri Aurobindo on Shakespeare: By K. D. Sethna. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. Price: Rs. 35.

How can one describe a pilgrim's rapture when he confronts the Triveni Sangam? Critical categories take leave of one's literary arsenal when reading *Sri Aurobindo on Shakespeare*. Sri Aurobindo, William Shakespeare, K. D. Sethna. Here is a book not to be quaffed at a single sitting, though slender it be. Sri Aurobindo missed no word or nuance of Shakespeare. It is impossible for K. D. Sethna to be careless when dealing with Sri Aurobindo's pronouncements on the Bard of Avon. Only when we too can turn in such dedication that we can adventure in the Shakespearian spaces illumed by Sri Aurobindo's seer-vision.

This book is about Sri Aurobindo and Shakespeare. Sri Sethna finds certain affinities between Shakespeare and Sri Aurobindo and prepares us to trace them:

“Sri Aurobindo is that extraordinary type of Yogi whose aim is to reach up to the Superhuman, the Divine, in order to strike back upon life — strike back not with a lash of light urging man to renounce earth by a mighty mass-movement towards Nirvana but with a sort of super-Prospero's staff so as to awaken man to the possibilities of a divine drama on the stage of the world. Sri Aurobindo would recreate human life.”

Both Sri Aurobindo and Shakespeare have “the sheer demiurgic power of creation.” Sri Aurobindo admired the Elizabethan Viswamitra for creating a world of his own, a Hiranyagarbha-power, “the luminous mind of dreams.” While Sri Aurobindo's admiration for Shakespeare is deep, he is not uncritical. So he says: “The greatest minds have their limitations and Shakespeare's over-abounding wit shuts him out from two Paradises, the mind of child and the heart of a mother.” Sri Aurobindo's comparatist criticism weighing Shakespeare alongside the Sanskrit dramatists is full of illuminations.

K. D. Sethna misses none of the significant pronouncements of Sri Aurobindo on Shakespeare seen in the background of English literature. In the process we gain a grammar of dramatic poetry (not merely poetic drama) which brings into our vision superb wielders of the poetic line like Keats and Browning. *Sri Aurobindo on Shakespeare* is rich reading in every way for the book also reveals Sri Aurobindo's utter humility as a critic. As if abashed by his own lofty pronouncements, he says: “These are tricks of language, and idiosyncrasies of preference. One has to put each thing in its place without confusing issues.” Our grateful thanks to Sri Sethna for this astute analysis of a dramatic poet by an epic creator.

DR. PREMA NANDAKUMAR

College Teachers and Administrators — A Handbook: By I. V. Chalapati Rao. Booklinks Corporation, Narayanguda, Hyderabad-500 029. Price. Rs. 90.

Education is an important conduit of social and economic change. The quantitative expansion of education, particularly higher education, in the post-independence period is indeed impressive. However, the qualitative aspects of education are causing concern. There is hardly any academic atmosphere in our educational institutions including universities. The educational standards have nosedived at all levels, in spite of significant growth in public outlay on education.

It is widely believed that the expansion in education is poorly planned. While the masses suffer from illiteracy and ignorance, the emphasis has all along been on higher education, particularly university education. Consequently, those who come out of schools and colleges are ill-equipped to face the challenges of life. The document entitled, "The Challenge of Education — A Policy Perspective" has pertinently pointed out, "A preponderant majority come out of educational institutions with very little capacity of self-study, poor language and communication skill, a highly limited world view and hardly any sense of social and national responsibility." The book under review, containing 31 chapters, throws useful light on some of the neglected areas in the educational field.

It looks as if the educational institutions are functioning to produce degree-holders. There is hardly any attempt to promote a spirit of enquiry and a sense of social responsibility. The stress is on examination results, and extra-curricular activities are left in the lurch. Educational institutions remain closed for weeks together due to trepidations engineered by students who often become pawns in the hands of politicians. Most teachers welcome these developments though not overtly as private tuitions are primary for them. The author has rightly observed, "Decline in academic standards can, therefore, be attributed to the fact that teaching is lecture-based, teacher-paced and examination-oriented" (p. 49). There is practically no accountability in the educational field.

The author, who is a distinguished educationist with vast experience as a teacher as well as an administrator, has done a very good job by presenting the role of educational administrators in improving the image of educational institutions. The book has dealt with all aspects of educational reforms, keeping in view the need for toning up quality. It is an extremely useful guide to all those who are serious about initiating measures to obviate the obtuse atmosphere on the campus.

DR. I. SATYA SUNDARAM

Sankara : By I. V. Chalapati Rao. Published by Telugu University, Kalabhavan, Hyderabad-4. Price : Rs. 18-50.

Jagadeuru Adi Sankaracharya was almost unique in the history of thought. He combined in himself the attributes of a poet, a logician, a devotee and a mystic as well as being the architect of the monastic system of philosophy that bears his name.

Throughout the international world of philosophy Sri Sankara is recognised as the Prince Philosopher of Non-dualism (*Advaita*)

who laid out the Path of Knowledge (*Jnana Marga*) as the means to the realisation of the individual's oneness with the Supreme.

Another important aspect of Sri Sankaracharya is his great contribution to Hindu religion through his yeoman service in purifying the path of devotion (*Bhakti Marga*). Sankara's greatness lies in the fact that he did not make the institution of religion a rigid "nut" affair, but made it as flexible as possible within the framework of Vedic prescriptions.

Mr. Chalapati Rao, the author, is of the opinion that "Sankara's message has a special significance in the present world and modern times...when there is no catholic outlook or deep and spiritual life." He feels that never before in the history of our country the values had dipped so low as they have now. And, therefore, he undertook to present briefly the life of Sankaracharya, the humanist, poet, integrator and philosopher, for the benefit of the younger generation.

Mr. Chalapati Rao is a distinguished educationist. He served over thirty years in different capacities — as Principal, Deputy Director of Higher Education and Director of SCERT, Hyderabad, besides working as Registrar of the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad. He has authored about twenty books of intrinsic literary and cultural value. His latest work, translation from Telugu, the autobiography in three volumes of *Andhra Kesari* T. Prakasam would be of great value to readers all over the country and abroad.

The book under review is divided into eleven chapters and covers all the important events in Sankara's illustrious life. The social and secular aspects of Sankara's life and teaching have been focussed very well. The presentation is both analytical and interesting. The book is a welcome addition to the many volumes available now on Sankara, and should be read with profit both by students and intelligent lay persons.

BHAVARAJU

Paper Boats (1921), *On the Sand-dunes* (1923), *The Nature of Creative Art* (1950): The new centenary editions of books by K. S. Venkataramani. Published by Sri K. Narayanaswami, 5, Brindavan Street, Mylapore, Madras-4, on behalf of the Birth Centenary Celebration Committee. Price: Rs. 15, Rs. 15 and Rs. 5, respectively.

K. S. Venkataramani (1891-1952) is that rare bird that warbles in our neighbourhood once in a while and flies away one knows not where. Unlike Keats's nightingale, Venkataramani knew all "the weariness, the fever and the fret" of life. He had a share larger than is given to men of his gifts and academic attainments,

of life's agonies and less of its ecstasies. Yet, suffering did not sour his temper or sear his soul. He derived whatever joy he could from looking at the stars in the sky, the flowers in the field, the monsoon clouds laden with fertilising rain-drops, the river eddying its way to the sea, the catamaran and the climbing waves, in short, whatever bountiful Nature offered to man as its gifts, both tangible and intangible.

Venkataramani was a thinker and writer, idealistic to the core of his being, with an unshakeable faith in rustic simplicity. With a poetic streak in him, he turned everything he saw and fell into words of beauty and charm. The spoken or the written word had for him not the ordinary meaning attached to it. The vitality of a word depended on the degree of suggestive strength which the creative artist imparted to it by his own personality. He said: "For purposes of trade and commerce and the inanities of daily life every word has no doubt a clear meaning attached to it almost as if it were by a statute. But it is really dead weight in an atmosphere of art unless the creative artist by his magic touch raises the dead and makes the word live by reflecting his soul."

Venkataramani's writings — he wrote short stories, novels, essays and Gitanjali-type reflections in poetic-prose on life, nature and God — can be best appreciated if one looks upon him as a patriot first and foremost, an apostle of Arcadian simplicity and an advocate of the Advaitic view of the oneness of the ultimate Reality. He wrote both in English and Tamil and he rarely let go a sentence without embellishing it without a simile or a metaphor or with the magic touch, as he would put it, of the creative artist. The temptation to quote Venkataramani is too strong to resist but space forbids giving free reign to one's desire.

"Paper Boats", which appeared in 1921, when Venkataramani was 30, is a collection of essays on village life and social customs as well as profiles of archetypal individuals — the grandmother of the joint family, the successful man under the British Raj, the village untouchable, the Hindu pilgrim and the fisherman. "On the Sand-dunes" (why sand-dunes when "dunes" would suffice) contains Venkataramani's credo — set your face against industrialism and urbanisation.

"The Nature of Creative Art", based on a series of lectures that Venkataramani delivered at some universities, presents his exalted view of creative art and criticism, both of which, according to him, are the two sides of the same coin. Both become authentic, even indistinguishable, when they spring from

“Swaanubhava”. He places on the same pedestal the Advaitin, the poet and the *rasika*.

Venkataramani needs to be read to be really understood. Even if one doesn't agree with all that he says, the manner of his telling holds one in thrall. The style is the man.

V. SIVARAMAKRISHNAN

Great Indian Patriots : Volumes 1 & 2 : By P. Rajeswara Rao. Mittal Publications, New Delhi-110 059. Price Rs. 250 and Rs. 225, respectively.

P. Rajeswara Rao, a leading advocate and a journalist, is last in the line of the great Andhra journalists in English such as Rama Rao, Khasa Subba Rao, Iswara Dutt and M. Chalapati Rao.

It was said that A. G. Gardiner remarked on seeing biographical sketches of Iswara Dutt that Iswara Dutt was his Indian edition. No doubt if Gardiner were alive today, he would unhesitatingly have hailed Rajeswara Rao as his super Indian edition. His early acquaintance with all great men of his times and the inspiration he drew from Iswara Dutt's *My Portrait Gallery* and *Sparks and Fumes* impelled him to take to the art of writing biographical pen-portraits of patriots, statesmen, politicians, scholars and sages. He is a past-master in the art of painting pen-pictures and thumb-nail sketches. Every sketch is replete with interesting facts and fascinating anecdotes spiced with personal touch. The brevity of expression and the beauty of language go together to make every biographical piece a sparkling gem — chiselled and cut nicely.

Volume I consists of lives of 60 great men beginning with Andhra Kesari and ending with Rajaji. These 60 sketches which were published in “Indian Express” every week came in book-form entitled “Profiles in Patriotism”. The first edition was exhausted in no time. Meanwhile, he wrote some 51 sketches beginning with Mahatma Gandhi and concluding with Indira Gandhi. In these volumes, the readers feel inter-faced with giants like Jawaharlal, Subhas Chandra Bose, C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, Tej Bahdur Sapru, M. N. Roy, Jinnah and a host of pre-independent and post-independent stalwarts.

The author's ability to handle the English language with effortless ease arrests attention, and compels admiration, though he did not make any tall claims of his being a student of English language and literature in the introduction.

The printing and get-up are attractive. The volumes deserve a pride of place on bookshelves of book-lovers.

K. GOPALAKRISHNA MURTHY

Brahmavidyaa : The Adyar Library Bulletin, Vol. 55.1991. The Adyar Library and Research Centre. The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras-20. Price : Rs. 100.

This valuable bulletin contains nine research articles written by eminent scholars. The first one entitled "H-Sound in the Pratyahara Sutras of Panini", after a long discussion, concludes with evidence and illustrations that Panini in his enumeration of Samskrit letters took into account, not the phonemics but the articulatory processes only, and that 'H' in *ha-l* is different from the *h* in *ha*, *ya*, *va*, *ra* and *t*. This difference is highlighted in four places. The second article "Propagation of Written Literature in Indian Tradition" deals with topics like "Vidya-dana", its benefits, "Scribe", "equipments for writing", copying of the manuscript, exhibition and deposit of manuscripts, etc., based mostly on the text *Kriyakalpataru*. Some outstanding philosophical issues that figure in disputes between Mimamsakas and Buddhists, is the third. The article "Winning over the worlds through the Agnihotra" is a translation of a relevant portion of *Jaiminiya Brahmana*, with the Samskrit text in Devanagari script. This text cautions us against committing errors in the performance of the ritual. "No body in this world should enjoy things for himself" is the message conveyed herein. "Why the Asamavayi Karana" is another article, which shows why a noninherent cause is necessarily to be admitted. Dr. Kunhan Raja in the last essay concludes that there is nothing which stands in the way of the popular tradition making Sankara and Mandana-misra contemporaries in the 8th century A. D. There are reviews of sixty-two books highly helpful to students and scholars alike.

B. K. SASTRY

Encounter with Islam : Edited by Dr. S. D. Kulkarni. Published by BHISHMA, B 7 - 8 Sreepal Apartments, Panch Pakhadi, Thane-400602. Price ; Rs. 320.

A book of this type, if properly understood, is the need of the day. The editor dared to bring to limelight the harm done to India by Sultanate and Mughals, and present the essence of Islam and Muhammad's teachings very objectively corroborating his statements by quoting verse and chapter from the Koran and the writings of contemporary eye witnesses. In addition to the subjects, Muhammad the prophet, first four pious caliphs, etc., expansion of the Sultanate and sway of the Mughals — all ranging from 1206 to 1856 A. D. in chronological order, are also described. Contributions of kings like Akbar, etc., are not left out. Shivaji's heroic

part is portrayed. Defects of Hindu kings are also pointed out. We have to learn lessons from history. This book should necessarily be studied by all Muslim brothers, pseudo-secularists and Hindus also to have a correct idea of historical facts and then introspect themselves.

B. K. SASTRI

The Mother — Education. Part Two. : Sri Aurobindo Book Distribution Agency, Pondicherry-2. Price : Rs. 30.

This compilation consists mainly of selections from the Mother's correspondence and conversations with the students and teachers of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education. The first section consists of written statements, the second of conversations. Most aspects of education with the exception of physical education are discussed.

Mother's advice and answer to a question "How can one develop one's thought?" is as follows—"You must read with much attention and concentration, not novels or dramas, but books that make you think. You must meditate on what you have understood. Talk little and speak only when indispensable." According to Mother, everyone should learn Sanskrit — Sanskrit that is behind all the languages of India (p. 219). It should be the national language (p. 113). Truth, harmony and liberty should be the guiding principles of the new ideal of education. (p. 7). The section on National Education deserves a keen study.

This book is full of valuable suggestions which, if followed, will usher in a new and brighter India.

"KASYAPA"

ENGLISH — TELUGU

India Plunges into All-Round Chaos : By Pratapa Ramasubbaiah. Published by Marxist Adhyayana Vedika, Hyderabad. Price : Rs. 25. (Part I - English and Part II-Telugu)

The author participated in the freedom struggle as a Congressman and later joined the Communist party. He had later on resigned from CPI and decided to remain an independent Marxist thinker. He continued his studies into Marxism-Leninism-Maoism in the light of world national freedom struggles and International Communist Movement. He is a prolific writer on matters of contemporary interest, one of them being a book on Spanish Civil War.

The book under review is a collection of selected articles in English and Telugu. Part one of this volume, in English, contains thirteen articles beginning with "Human Elements in Shakespeare's works" and ended with "The Place of Muslims in

Free India." Part two also contains thirteen selected articles written in Telugu. The first is (when translated into English) "Alround Distress Extending all over" and the last one "Retreat of Communist Movement". All the articles incorporated into this volume are of topical interest. As time passes they lose their novelty and, often, their readability. The only exceptions are the articles on Shakespeare, Kalidasa, Vavilala and Sthanam Narasimha Rao. Though it is possible for a non-Marxist student to be prepared to read the works of Marxist writers with the object of learning from them, it becomes either difficult or uncomfortable to read Marxist thought injected into classics like Ramayana, Bharata, Kshetravaya Padams and even the science of Ayurveda to give them bad names.

To conclude, the book offers difficult reading for one who is not a Marxist. However, there is a very strong under-current of sincerity based on the belief by the learned author that Marxism is the panacea for all the ills of mankind. In the various articles the learned author has expressed many opinions emphatically. It is difficult to agree with most of them. The exceptions are his views on corruption in public life, double-face of the politicians, role of Muslims in Free India and Reservation for jobs.

DR. B. P. RAO

SANSKRIT — ENGLISH

The Agamasastra of Gaudapada: Edited by Vidhusekhara Bhattacharya. Motilal Banarsidass Pvt. Ltd. Delhi-7. Price: Rs. 200.

This is a reprint of the first edition published in 1941. This is a very critical edition of the text *Agamasastra*, otherwise known as *Gaudapada Karikas*, because this is based on many manuscripts and editions. Sanskrit text is given in Roman script and the editor gives his translation in English, which is followed by the editor's own commentary wherein he quotes many passages from many Buddhist and other philosophical works also.

His interpretations are based on a wide and deep study of Buddhist philosophical works which, according to him, have greatly influenced Gaudapada. He differs from Sankara, who, he feels, grossly misunderstood the original import of the Karikas. Every assertion of the editor is based on documentary evidence.

The Karikas are older than the *Mandukya Upanishat*, which has drawn much from the former. The four books were originally four independent treatises. By the time of Sankara the original text has undergone some changes. The actual name of the author of Karikas was Gauda. Neither *Paramarthasaara*, nor *Yogavasishtha* can be considered as the basis for the Karikas. These

are some of his conclusions. Pre-Sankara teachers of Vedanta and a conspectus of the contents of the *Aganasastra*, are presented for critical, historical and philological understanding of the *Agamasastra*. This book is of great help to all students of Advaita philosophy.

B. KUTUMBA RAO

SANSKRIT—TELUGU

Sankara Grandha Ratnavali : Volumes 12, 13 and 14. Sadhana Grandhamandali, Tenali-522 201. Price : Rs. 30, 35 and 35, respectively.

All devotees of Sri Sankara and students of Advaita philosophy are highly beholden to the publishers for having brought out these precious books in Samskrit with Telugu commentaries by eminent Pandits.

Volume 12 : This contains *Lalita Trisati Stotra* with Sankara's commentary. The original text is followed by a translation by T. Raghava Narayana Sastry who was not only a scholar of high repute, but also an Upasaka of high order.

Three hundred names in praise of the Goddess Lilata are in the Advaitic interpretation as against the Saaktic interpretation given to the famous *Lalita Sahasranama* by Bhaskaracharya. A daily recitation of this Stotra which is embedded with the Bijaaksharas of the Panchadasi Mantra is believed to be highly efficacious. The translation is the most authentic one and we commend it to all the devotees.

Volume : 13 : Contains *Upadesa Sahasri* of Sankara. It consists of 116 prose passages and 694 Slokas in Samskrit. This work is quoted very often by Suresvara and later Advaita writers. Like other minor works (*Prakaranas*) of Sankara, this also explains the main tenets of the Advaita doctrine, citing Upanishadic texts. This work was translated to some extent by late Veluri Sivarama Sastry, a famous scholar and poet and then completed by Sri H. Sambasiva Sastry who also is an eminent Pandit.

Volume 14 : This contains three *Prakaranas* *Vakyavritti*, *Hastamalakiya* and *Adhyatmapatala*. *Vakyavritti* is a scholarly exposition of the famous Mahaavaakyas "*Tatvam asi*", etc. It consists of 53 Slokas only, but the commentary thereon in Samskrit extends to over 208 pages. It discusses all technical problems in detail.

Hastamalakiya written by Hastamalaka, a direct disciple of Sankara, contains 12 verses in Samskrit. That it was commented by Sankara himself speaks of the greatness of this work.

Adhyatmapatala : Apastamba, the well known author of *Dharmasutras*, devoted a chapter therein to discuss spiritual

matters. It was also commented upon by Sankara. All the three are translated by Laxmavadhani, a scholar in Veda, Bhashya, Mimamsa and Vedanta, now a Sanyasin. These volumes deserve to be read by all students and followers of Advaita philosophy.

“ SANDILYA ”

SAMSKRIT

Advaita Vijaya Vaijayānti : By Sri Kasikaanandagiriji Maharaj.
Price : Rs. 10.

Mahishaasuramardani Stotram with commentary in Samskrit, and Hindi and English translations. Price : Rs. 10.

Ambaashtaka Stotram with Samskrit commentary and Hindi and English translations. Price : Rs. 10. All the three are available at Bharati Samskrita Vidya Niketanam, 12 Shankar Kunj, Asalfa Govinda Nagar, Ghatkopar, Bombay-84.

Bharati Samskrita Vidyāniketanam is doing signal service to the Samskrit language and Advaita Vedanta by conducting Samskrit teaching classes in selected places, arranging for teaching of Sri Sankara's Bhashyas, and by publishing valuable Samskrit books like these under review, in addition to the maintenance of a school.

Polemics of Dvaita and Advaita Vedanta is the theme of the first book. Dvaitins maintain that the famous verse “*Khsetrajnam chaapi maam viddhi*” etc., in the *Bhagavatgita* declares that Jeeva is different from Paramatman. Dvaitins presented their arguments and challenged the Advaitins to counter them. Sri Kasikaanandagiriji, an intellectual giant proficient in almost all lores, took up the cause of Advaita and rebutted the arguments advanced by the Dvaitins. This booklet gives a summary of these discussions and is highly educative.

The other two books, famous Stotrams in Samskrit, contain the original texts in Devanagari script, a lucid and detailed Samskrit commentary by Kasikaanandagiriji, Hindi and English translation by Dr. Usha Bhise. The *Mahishasura Stotra* is full of alliterations and is not easily understandable. Such a text is made easy by this commentary. So is the case with the second one.

B. K. RAO

TELUGU

Parvateesaprabhu Satakam : By Prof. Kota Sundara Rama Sarma. Tripurasundari Pratishtanam, Chintaguntapalem, Machilipatnam. Not priced.

Bhavagopi : By Sri Kuchi Suryaprakasa Sarma, Anakapalli.
Price : Rs. 10.

Muvvala Chetikarra : By Sikhamani. Book Centre, Visakha-
patnam-1. Price : Rs. 15.

Alolaku Voramiledu : By A. Surya prakash. Rachana Publishers,
Pant Road, Armoor. Price : Rs. 7.

Antarvani : By Yelchuri Vijayaraghava Rao, Ram saran, 4A/45 Sion
West, Bombay-22.

Abhyuddhanam : By Yelchuri Vijayaraghava Rao. Address as above
Not Priced.

Bhutana masmi chetana : By Sattiraju Krishna Rao. Kalyani
Publications, Basantnagar, Hyderabad-27. Price : Rs. 15

It is often asserted, of course with a pardonable flair for generalisation, that industrial age and brilliant poetic output do not go together. Industrial advancement, scientific and technical progress, and resultant material values no doubt have a scuttling effect on the leisurely rythm of life which critics of yester years believe was a necessary pre-condition for spontaneous poetry, rich in aesthetic values. This viewpoint may or may not be true but one may not fail to take note of an unbridled upsurge of contemporary poetic output, thanks to the availability of the so-called social issues easy to ruminate upon, non-compliance of scholastic and metrical regimen and an explosion of mass media. It is hard and perhaps hazardous to evaluate in the contemporary poetry in the context of accepted canons of poetic excellence. But there is no denying that some poets novicial and some reputed, have something to say especially in the social milieu. Their thought patterns, flair for muse and totality of literary impact may not be above average but they deserve attention by dint of sheer sense of timing and the quickness in poeticisation. In the grist of the mill quickness few poems of classical tone and tenor appear once in a way and reach the readers for whom they are meant. The general poetry of the often concerning itself with special problems and exuding abundant social commitment, has come to stay as an order of the day. It is in the nature of things that protagonist of time tested formulate and his antagonist co-exist.

Prof. K. Sundara Rama Sarma, a polyglot, a poet, a pedagogue and NRI who has held high positions in and outside India, and has recently started a humanitarian foundation in India in memory of his wife, is a multifaceted personality. In the heart of Pune city on a hillock the temple of Parvateeswara (Eswar on the mountain) is situated. Inspired by His Darshan Prof. Sarma composed a Sataka in Telugu and later in Sanskrit at the behest of late C. D. Deshmukh. Thus the present work is in Telugu and Sanskrit. The present Sataka has attracted many encomiums

from stalwarts like Viswanadha and Jammalamadaka among others. It has gusto, spontaneity, scholarship, fine imagination and rich imagery in both languages. The poetry is cast in classical mould and one expects Prof. Sarma to come out with more classical works. On the whole an appreciable poetic work.

Bhavagopi by Kuchi Suryaprakasa Sarma employs Gopi-Krishna lore for its subject. It has classical metres and lays stress on aesthetic excellence. The concept of Madhura Bhakti permeating althrough the poem interprets the Jeevatma and Paramatma concepts in the relationship between Lord Krishna and Gopis. Each of the fragments of thought in this context with one or two verses employed to portray a single incident flash a fine thought. Mellifluous stile with a generous sprinkling of pun and rhetoric, more often than not aimed at suggesting Krishna philosophy, make the poem a shining example of purposeful Chamatkaras.

Sikhamani, reputed modern poet, comes out with a very potential poetic volume *Muvvala Chetikarra* containing forty-three poetic pieces in verse libre, all of them very readable and inspiring in their content and manner. The title itself is symbolic of human limitations vis-a-vis his aspirations in the social spectrum. The poet presents life from various angles. Philosophic undertones, powerful utterances, fine poetic imagery, a deep concern for human welfare and chiselled poetic craft make this volume easily one of the best in the genre.

A. Suryaprakash in his poetic volume *Alalaku Votamiledu* containing 40 pieces reflects the present day poetic order. The volume is named after one of the pieces herein. In the first piece the poet assumes a pedagogic stance and tries to define poetry at length. Poetry he avers is a symbol of the beautiful, metrical display of thought and a means for social welfare. Mini poetry also has its own share in this volume. The perpetual practice of a poet aimed at excellence and social purpose is an ocean and the present pieces are its waves. One hopes that by dint of practice Suryaprakash would bring out bigger volumes of poetry from his heart's ocean.

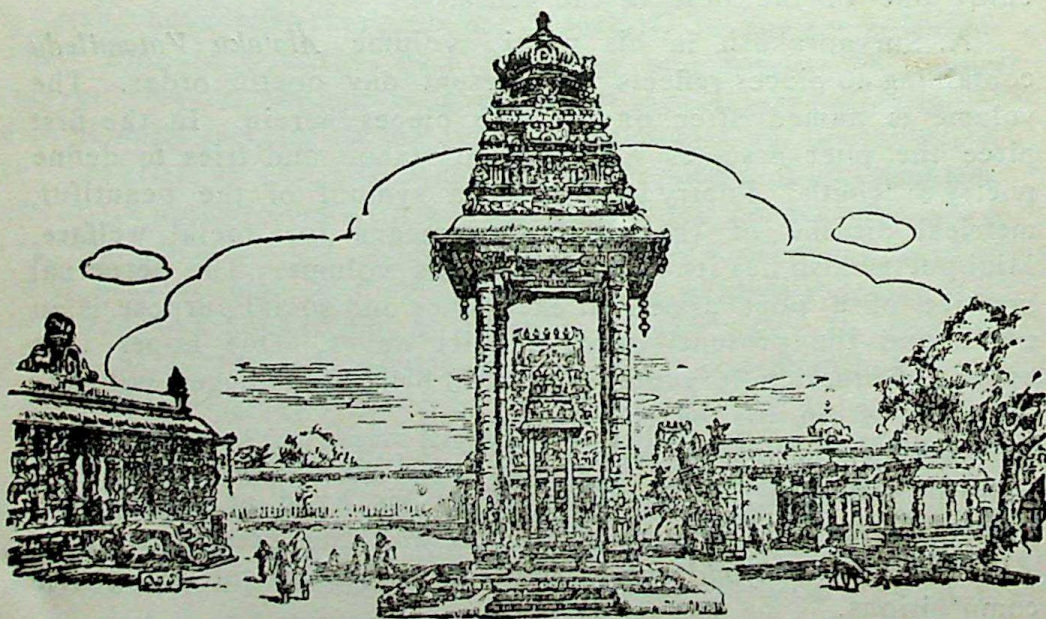
Yelchuri Vijayaraghava Rao a flutist of global repute is a versatile culturist. He has been trying his hand at poetry also with a considerable measure of success and the present volumes *Antarvani* and *Abhyuddhanam* bring together few of his poetic compositions.

Antarvani has thirty-eight pieces published previously in various journals. Vijayaraghava Rao's imaginative faculty is evident althrough. Though he is not committed to any poetic

'ism' as such, an eye for the beautiful and his human approach make the pieces mostly written in free verse readable. *Abhyuddhanam* gives a glimpse of a more mature poetic approach. Nineteen pieces compiled herein have variegated content and thought. *Abhyuddhanam*, the title piece, gives a glimpse of Vijayaraghava Rao's poetic viewpoint. He feels that a poet's heart should respond to many thoughts and beauties of the unlimited universe. This piece appears to be the best in the compilation considering its extent and intense passion for human values. Equally good are smaller pieces like *Adyantalu* reflecting the eternal quest and *Sadhana* of the poet. In fine, a poetic escapade of a maestro with latent talent and sense of projectionism.

Bhutanamasmichetana by Sattiraju Krishna Rao has Geya and classical metres. Though a maiden venture the present poetic volume testifies to the fine imaginative faculty, spiritual undertones and a flair for the beautiful. While all the pieces (thirty-three in all) are generally good, pieces like "Sitakochiluka" come in for special mention. On the whole a commendable effort.

DR. D. RAMANATHA SASTRI



TAGORE AND THE REALISATION OF GOD

Dr Sir S. RADHAKRISHNAN

India has 85 per cent of its people Hindu, but the Constitution makers refused to establish Hinduism as a State religion. They have said, here, the State will not identify itself with any religion. It will give absolute freedom of worship to all religions to practise their own ways, to grow according to their own genius, fully assured that the invisible Supreme is sustaining every genuine seeker of truth and will help him to reach the Supreme. The routes are the same and the lights are exactly the same. William Penn said when we reach the Supreme we throw off our liveries which divide us one from another and we stand face to face as members of the one household of God, whether we worship that God in the form of Christ or Buddha or Allah or anything like that.

The most important thing is the spiritual change, the transmutation of personality, the complete overthrow of your narrow egoistic self, and the establishment of a universal altruistic nature if you are a religious man; if not, you are not. Therefore, Tagore writes somewhere in his "Religion of Man" :

"We should remember that the doctrine of special creation is out of date and the idea of a specially favoured race belongs to a barbarian age. We have come to understand that any special truth or special culture which is wholly isolated from the universal is not true at all, there are no chosen races, there are no chosen creeds, there are no chosen nations, we all belong to the household of God, whether we worship him one way or the other. He is there, looking into the depths of our heart, assisting us in our endeavour to grow upwards and change ourselves."

If all this is so, the practical consequence of it is service of man. He called his lectures by the name : "The Religion of Man". Man is the potential candidate of spiritual transformation, every man, whatever may be his caste or community. He knew that in our country we allowed so many social disabilities and restrictions to impede the progress of ordinary people, and when he looked at these deviations from the truth, from the practice of love, he said : My head is bowed in sorrow, my eyes keep back the tears, my heart is hurt by this reproach, I am humiliated, I am dishonoured in my native depths. I feel that I have done

Danger today is the non-assertion of the will of the human individual. If people only had the conscience to protest against their leaders, against their powerful dictators, against people who take hold of them and twist their minds in any way they choose. If they are able to do it, then nothing is inevitable here. Man is a moulder of history in an ultimate sense of the term, he is the one significant being in this world. He will be able to change the course of events, provided he will act sufficiently.

People have told: Never has it happened in history, that any nation which had power, gave up its power, and any people who were enslaved attained their freedom without bloodshed and suffering. That is what he was told, yet he stood against that doctrine of history and won freedom for the country in a way which did not alterate his conscience, did not lose for him the esteem of the world. He was able to get both and change the course of history. That is what he was able to do. What one man was able to do, his genius touched the heart of many people who followed him. So also today, when we are face to face with things which make us feel despair of the future of humanity, it is the purpose of the human being to say after all, all these scientific achievements show if anything the superiority of the human mind and not the omnipotence of matter. Scientific conquests or conquests of nature, the whole civilization has been a continuous conquest of nature of man and there is no reason to stop that process of conquering nature, nature of human beings, nature of the surrounding forces, these things can be altered, can be reshaped to suit to the will of the individual the pattern which we have.

The will is to march forward towards a new society, a new civilization. The circumstances which have brought us to the present position, they are a challenge to us, and it is essential that we should face the challenge, use the opportunity and try to control events and make them work for different kinds of purposes altogether. Tagore in his last address on the crisis of civilization, has said :

"Even though I am faced with this enormous mess of futility, with this unnecessary slaughter of human beings, with the kind of destruction which we are having. I shall never commit the grievous sin of losing faith in the nature of man. I die an optimist, I die with hope in my heart and with faith in the future of humanity. I do not believe that man is so helpless, so impotent, that he can't withstand the forces which are there set against him."

He asks us to cling to ultimate common sense in the midst of all this confusion. He believed in regeneration through love and personal suffering. His voice was the conscience of the age. He became a guide for his generation. He led a life which had no littleness about it. He was concerned with the profundities of life, with the invisible spirit of man. He is a symbol of that undying spirit which gives us hope that we can yet overcome the difficulties, build a new society, a new civilization.

From a talk at Stuttgart, 23.10.1961.

something of which I am not worthy; and so he said, he called to his country: Get rid of these social disabilities, remove the shackles which cripple men, which enslave their minds, which make of them slaves - so to say - either in religion, or in social affairs, or in other things. He asked us for developing the freedom of the human spirit and establishing the dignity of man. So he was not unaware of all the troubles we passed through, and he traced them to our disloyalty and fundamental principles which we proclaim with a loud voice and practise in an illiberal way. He knew the difficulties from which we were passing. If it is so, if the human individual has the essential spirit in him, he need not consider himself to be a victim of necessity.

Tagore writes in one of his poems : At one pole of my being I am one with stocks and stones, at another I am separate from all, in other words, each human being has so much of nature in him but also an element of super-nature. There is in him the temporal, there is also the timeless, the successive and the non-successive, or both of them to be found in every human being. Time and eternity are there found together, we are victims of necessity so long as we ignore the eternal in us, so long as we don't recognise that we are sparks of spirit, race of the divine and merely reduce ourselves to an item in the series of cosmic happenings. If we make ourselves into an object, if the pure inwardness, the freedom, the subjectivity in us is reduced to nothing, we become split souls, our freedom is reduced to routine, we are not able to achieve anything. Everything in this world has been achieved by fighting against fatality, by fighting against necessity, by fighting against what seems to us to be inevitable. If we forget it, if we say it is inevitable, we are helpless, we can't do anything, we are refusing to assert our human responsibility. To abstain from choice is itself making a choice. You are giving up your responsibility and saying that we are pawns in a cosmic chess game played by impersonal forces of nature. We are nothing of the kind to say that men have always been, that men will always be, that nothing is going to change human nature. It is a counsel of despair, it is to lose faith in God, lose faith in yourself.

It is, therefore, essential for every human being in these critical times when the seemingly inevitable is so catastrophic in character, to stand up against the force of circumstances, to assert a superiority of the human will and proclaim that man has changed this world considerably and will be able to change this world again. It will be possible for him to withstand the force of circumstances, change the current of events.

History is an interplay between creative personality on one side and geographical factors and historical forces on the other. It is the interaction between the two that has developed history to the extent to which it has come today. If we give up our creative personalities, if we make the human subject into a mere object, if the thinking being becomes merely a thing, then we have abdicated our right, we have ceased to be human beings, we have given in to the claim of a series of objects.

RADHAKRISHNAN

FROM AN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

ARCHIE J. BAHM

University of Mexico

One need have no hesitation in honouring S. Radhakrishnan for here is a person to whom honour is obviously due. In America his name is better known than that of Shankara or even Aurobindo. He is better known in the United States today than any other Indian except Gotama, Gandhi, Nehru and perhaps Tagore. His command of Western philosophy makes Western philosophers respect him quite apart from his other achievements. And his ability to speak to them in a language which is closer to their own way of thinking than most others who have tried to express Indian philosophical ideas to them gives him a ready audience in America.

But his success not merely as a teacher of philosophy, writer on philosophy and as a philosopher but also in the world of practical political affairs gives American philosophers cause for notice. Only in India, and certainly not in the United States, could a life-long philosopher and teacher of philosophy become the head of a great nation. Although there are now more than four thousand teachers of philosophy in the United States, only two that I know of have ever risen to political prominence, both as United States Commissioners of Education, Wm. T. Harris about a century ago and Sterling McMurrin during the past two years. The profundity of interest in philosophy in India is the envy of philosophers in all other countries. And the success of Radhakrishnan not only in teaching philosophy but in rising in personal stature to a position of practical political prominence gives many American philosophers further cause of envy. Since the time of Plato, Western philosophers have idealized philosophers as rulers; here when an Indian philosopher attains power, as a political leader, with opportunity for employing philosophical wisdom in influencing the affairs of state he automatically fulfils that Western ideal. The story of how Radhakrishnan employed his philosophical wisdom in public affairs is yet to be written. It should become a classical document of the history of philosophers in politics.

Turning to another side of Radhakrishnan's success story, there is an aspect which serves to dismay some Americans. He so thoroughly dominates the field of honour that every person who writes a book seems

to feel that he has failed unless he has obtained the blessings of Radhakrishnan in the form of an introduction to it. The practice of having a noted authority prepare an introduction is indeed a common one. But in the case of Radhakrishnan, this has become a mass phenomenon. Such phenomenon seems to have certain implications. One of these is that Indian thinkers appear to be unable to stand on their own feet and live by their own personal honour; at least this appearance to individualistic Americans is hard for them to understand, even though they may recognize the actual kinship of thought by so many Indians immersed in feeling themselves as children of "The Mother" presents no problem here to Indians. Yet, so long as the towering stature of Radhakrishnan overshadows all others, the undoubted capacities of other Indian thinkers may be left unnecessarily in the shade. Another apparent implication, which may be an appearance only, is that such a seemingly great quantity of introduction to long and complex works must signify some lack of thoroughness, in face of multitudes of other duties; however, a man with indefatigable energy can accomplish marvels unattainable by others.

Although I have admired Radhakrishnan's world outlook and universal vision and his personal efforts in behalf of world peace and harmony through mutual understanding by philosophers of different cultural traditions, I was startled here in Banaras recently when an Indian teacher of philosophy said he disliked my views because they resembled Radhakrishnan's. He was referring to my interest in comprehensive constructive synthesis of a world hypothesis which would include the essential virtues emphasized in each of the world's great cultural traditions. I fear that Radhakrishnan would not approve my 'organicism' as a world Hypothesis, even though he might commend its breadth of scope and optimistic outlook.

Surely the time has come for both historians of philosophy and philosophers concerned with their own philosophical systems to take full account of the major contributions of both Hindu, Western and Chinese philosophical traditions. To omit anyone of them is to short-change our historic and our emerging philosophies. *The History of Philosophy : Eastern and Western*, edited by Radhakrishnan, was indeed a landmark in tendencies in this direction. It included chapters on Chinese philosophies as well as Hindu and Western. But also, the portion devoted to Chinese thinkers was thin as compared with the others. Both Indian and Western thinkers including Radhakrishnan, continue to fall short in their appreciation of, and appropriation of, the wisdom of China. This failure is easily attributable to the great linguistic difficulties in learning and interpreting Chinese languages and need not indicate any lack of willingness to admire and profit from Chinese insight. Yet, the fact remains that without some grasp and integration of Chinese contributions into a world vision, such a vision will remain inadequate to serve as a long-run world philosophy. Radhakrishnan may yet make further contributions in this direction; his joining with P.T.Raju in preparing *The Concept of Man*, an introduction to comparative philosophy calling upon Hebrew, Greek, Chinese and Indian philosophers in a cooperative (1964) effort, may be

LAMENTATION OF DEVAYANI

Prof. P.P. SHARMA

So you have gone back to be acclaimed
a hero by the gods who may be
showering petals of the richest hue and fragrance
on one who has wrung from the adversary
the secret of reviving the dead.

Little did I guess then how your fondest dreams
and longings most intense
were not centred on me
and when you feigned by my song to be enchained
in your ears was ringing
the paen from the empyrean:
"Well done youngman, you've assured us our victory.
The Asuras will now be contained, your name will
go down in history.
No more shall rise the foe who has once been felled.
Great honour to you in thralldom could not be held
of the wily maiden, Shukra's daughter
who pined for you and lusted after".

In their celestial abodes they thus speak of you and me
and you are pleased to concur
throwing me naked to their harshest judgement.
My quarrel, however, is not with them but with you
who are concealing the fact of how you betrayed
and played havoc with the emotions of a maiden's heart.
Why don't you stand up and confess
before the adoring crowd, boquet in hand,
that the arcane knowledge you bring to them
you bought at a grievous price
of abasing yourself lower than the Asuras,
much maligned as they are by arrogant Devas ?

II

Are those regions beyond the skies so cold
that they have frozen your speech,

LAMENTATION OF DEVAYANI

11

immobilized the impulses of the soul,
 paralyzed that discrimination which sets
 right from wrong and would not let
 the innocent be blamed ?

Does not the memory of the days gone by
 when tossed into an unfriendly, alien world
 in me alone you found a prop, an anchor
 disturb your placid stay at home ?
 Even while losing your head in thunderous applause
 don't you remember my ever-radiant love
 which kept you wavering, indeterminate,
 sick for home on a steady keel ?

III

O ungrateful Kuch,
 of what coarse fibre is your soul formed
 that it takes not any imprint from what
 it has undergone ?
 As many as four times did my father retrieve it -
 the last most crucial, almost fatal to himself.

O insensitive one,
 you and the like of you are deaf and blind
 to the writhing agony of a lass
 having to choose between the life
 of one who gave her birth
 and of another through whose touch the woman
 came alive in her.

IV

Not liking your presence in our midst
 the Asuras burnt you up to cinders
 and mixed the ashes in the drink
 my father liked to be treated to of an evening.

My eyes swollen with crying
 my body aquiver with a strange emotion
 I stood petrified, tongue-tied on learning
 that my father had to kill himself to let you live.

Sensing in his bones that I would die without you
 he got ready for his body to be cut up for your release
 from his abdomen where you were put together and
 causing pain

He whispered to you the Sanjivani Mantra
 whereby you might reassemble his torn limbs

V

You were my world and I was lost in you.
When you got held up beyond twilight in the forest
whither you had gone to bring flowers and sacrificial fuel
my eyes struggling with tears would to looking out for you
the universe an aching void until you came and caressed me.

VI

O beshrew me,
I never felt you looked not at but through me
to something far beyond me, up in the heavens
the gratified looks of those who had sent you on the errand
of bringing the mysterious incantation from my father.
Your mean spirit could never rise above the purpose.
The heart of a maiden spontaneously offered
served you as a ladder to reach up to your goal.
A slave to success, you flew straight as an arrow
collecting your gains and walking away with a straight face
little caring for the hurt caused to the unsuspecting
by your cold-blooded programmed pursuit.

VII

O sinful one,
you turned me into a mere means
and your reason into a perverter of truth
declaring our separation justified
lest both of us sprung from the loins of Shukracharya
be guilty of incest.
Those who want an excuse often rationalize like this
while my silent cry is breaking my heart.

K. BALASUBRAMANIA IYER LAST OF THE "MYLAPOREANS"

Dr. D. ANJANEYULU

[K. Balasubramania Iyer was greatly interested in *Triveni* almost from its inception. So also his brother K. Chandrasekahran who was very closely associated with *Triveni* as a member of its Advisory Board until his demise in 1988. Their help was immense for its survival. The "Ashrama" their residence gave Ashraya to *Triveni*. This note whose birth centenary of Sri Iyer which was celebrated this year.--Editor]

Mylapore is, of course, familiar today to the outsiders who don't know it well enough, as one of the many postal districts of South Madras. To those a little older, old enough to have known it before the Second World War, it might be recognised as one of the quieter, middle-class residential areas, with old style bungalows and garden-houses, where life was leisurely and people, by and large, were known to be cultured and courteous, their superiority complex notwithstanding.

By Mylapore is here meant not so much a geographical area as a place representing a form of culture, a way of life and an attitude to social, political and other problems. *Festina Lente* (Hasten slowly) might be its dominant motto. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyer, for instance, was, strictly speaking, not a resident of Mylapore, for "The Grove" was on Eldams Road in Teynampet. But he was, otherwise, an archetypal Mylaporean - intelligent and enterprising, law-abiding though individualistic and none too orthodox in social life.

But, K. Balasubramania Iyer (whose birth centenary was celebrated this year) was a Mylaporean in every sense. Not unlike his father, V. Krishnaswami Aiyer (a friend and colleague of Gopal Krishna Gohale), whose sprawling residence, "Ashrama" was on Luz Church Road, close to Luz centre. It can hardly be located now, as it has long since been broken up into numerous bits of different sizes occupied by shops, housing tenements, petrol bunks and the like, not to speak of a popular cinema theatre.

Balasubramania Iyer, the eldest son of his father, who was born on 6 May 1892, was trained for the Law, like the latter, but did not take it as a full-time profession, though he started with it and kept his formal links with it till the end. He died on 30 September 1970, at the age of 78

that "education is the key to progress and prosperity." Not only was he a scholar in Sanskrit, Tamil and English, but quite familiar with many of the disciplines, covered by the univeristy curriculum.

He was, for many years, associated with the University of Madras, as a member of the Senate, Syndicate, Academic Council and various other bodies connected with its administration. He thought it was the Government's primary duty to provide free and compulsory elementary education, employing part-time teachers and social workers, if necessary. He was a source of great strength to Dr. A.L.Mudaliar, who was Vice-Chancellor for a record number of years, with whom he was able to see eye to eye on most matters.

Dr. Mudaliar was, in fact, his chief in another field as well. That was in the Legislative Council, in which Mudaliar was the Leader and Iyer was the Deputy Leader. Their speeches on all subjects of public interest were heard with respect by the leaders of different parties, including the D.M.K. Balasubrahmaniam Iyer was a member of the Council from 1952 to 1968, when he declined to contest, even at the importunity of the then Chief Minister, C.N. Annadurai.

Balasubrahmaniam Iyer was a great devotee of His Holiness Sri Chandra sekharendra Saraswati, Paramacharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham. The Swamiji conferred the title of "Dharmarakshamani" on Balasubrahmaniam Iyer. The Government of India honoured him by awarding "Padmabhushan".

No sketch of Balasubrahmaniam Iyer, however brief, can be complete without a reference to his close association and that of his family with this periodical, *Triveni*, almost from its inception in 1928. His sister, K. Savitri Ammal, and brother K. Chandrasekharan, both contributors to it, were on the Advisory Board, ever interested in its fortunes and progress. Balasubrahmaniam Iyer also presided over its Silver Jubilee Celebrations in Bangalore in 1953, though he didn't live to see its Golden Jubilee in Madras in 1979.

Balasubrahmaniam Iyer belonged to a group of cultured and affluent men, who contributed their best to our public life, without being caught in the rough and tumble of party politics. Circumstances might have favoured him, but he worked hard to make the best use of them. His might be a vanishing tribe, but his memory will be cherished by those who knew the value of his work for our society.

During his fairly long span of life, he did many things, making himself useful to society, without affecting the fortunes of his own family, by taking a plunge in the agitational politics of the Congress, with which he had close sympathies in his early days. It is mentioned that he was the treasurer of the Madras session of the Congress in 1927.

Like a loyal and dutiful son (of a distinguished father who died in 1911, before he was fifty), he not only took care of the family, whose

responsibilities automatically devolved on him, but chose to look after all the educational, charitable and medical institutions founded by his father. They included : the Madras Sanskrit College, the SSV Parthasala, the Venkataramana Ayurvedic Dispensary and College and many others. He was on the Board of Directors of the Indian Bank, founded by his father and others, after the liquidation of the Arbuthnott Bank. In fact, there was no cause dear to the heart of his father, which he did not try his level best to promote and perpetuate.

Two of them stand out from the rest. One was his ardent love of Sanskrit. The other was his serious commitment to and deep involvement in the cause of education at all stages, university education in particular. In his case, these two were complementary to each other.

Not only was he an erudite scholar in Sanskrit, but a fluent speaker in that language, not easy to master. It was a pleasant experience for the present writer to have heard him speak in lucid and simple Sanskrit on a wide variety of subjects from Kalidasa's *Sakuntalam* to Adi Sankara's *Viveka Choodamani*. On one of such occasions, the veteran orator in Tamil, Maposi, wondered whether Balasubramania Iyer was speaking, singing or chanting.

Balasubramania Iyer was one of the founder-Secretaries of the Kuppuswami Sastri Research Institute and was responsible for transferring the *Journal of Oriental Research*, managed by him to the Institute. It was also, thanks to his untiring efforts, that the Golden Jubilee of the Madras Sanskrit College was celebrated on a grand scale in January 1957, under the presidency of S. Radhakrishnan, the then Vice-President of India.

Radhakrishnan had obviously a soft corner for Iyer, with whom he used to crack jokes, at times. He it was who publicly mentioned the close similarity in physiognomy between Balasubramania Iyer and his father. At a public meeting once in Rajaji Hall, the invocation song was rendered by Srimati M.S. Subbulakshmi, with Dr. Radhakrishnan in the chair. In his vote of thanks at the end, Balasubramania Iyer, obviously by a slip of the tongue, referred to the good "speech" of Subbulakshmi, to the amusement of the audience. While Radhakrishnan was coming down from the dais, he was greeted by Subbulakshmi, to whom he said: "It appears you spoke very well at the meeting", to her embarrassed merriment.

As an educationist, who had a lot to do with policy-making at various levels, Balasubramania Iyer believed, with Dr. Radhakrishnan,

KALIDASA AND NATURE

K. BALASUBRAMANIA IYER

It has been said that the poet holds the mirror up to Nature. Literary criticism, both Indian and Western, estimates the true worth of a poet and the real essence of his poetry by the poet's attitude to Nature as revealed in his works. The great literary critic, Dandin, when mentioning the various 'alankaras' of genuine poetry, gives an honoured place to 'svabhavajana' and says: 'Truth about Nature is the culmination of sciences and is the ideal of all poetry.' Judged from this standpoint, we may state, without fear of exaggeration, that Kalidasa, of all, is Nature's poet. His devotion to Nature rose to the height of a spiritual reverence and attained the sublimity of a religious conviction. The great English poet, Wordsworth, once expressed the regret that he was not born a Pagan, so that he may worship the beautiful aspects of nature in the true spirit of heathen devotion:

Great God, I had rather be
A Pagan suckled in some creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn.

Kalidasa, much more than even Wordsworth, is profoundly convinced of the divinity of Nature. Instead of the conventional beginning of poems, adopted by Sanskrit writers, of an invocation to one's own Ishta Devata, he begins the 'Kumarasambhava' by the solemn affirmation of the divinity of the Himalayas. It will be wrong to think that this ascription of divinity is merely poetic, in the sense of being unscientific or untrue. The evolution from percept to concept is a familiar method in Science. Physicists describe certain gases as obeying or disobeying Boyle's Law as if it were an enactment for their guidance, and as if Science set forth an ideal, the perfect gas, for their initiation. The language seems to imply that gases are wanting in perfection, in that they fail to observe the exact letter of the law. Speaking in the same strain, one will have to say that Hydrogen is nearest to perfection, that Oxygen and Nitrogen are good enough in the affairs of everyday life and that Carbon-di-Oxide and Chlorine are poor sinners which yield to temptation. Sometimes, moral qualities are attributed to inanimate matter when we judge them according to the

fulfilment of the purpose for which we use them. For example, we refer in scientific parlance to good and bad radiators, or good and bad insulators, as if it were a duty on their part to radiate well or insulate well; as if there were failures on the part of Nature to come up to the proper standard. In using language like this and in ascribing moral qualities to Nature, Science is dealing with the perfect concepts as evolved from the percepts of Nature. In other words, it describes the good action or bad action of a certain object as viewed from the standpoint of the perfect concept of that body. Again, it is this perfect concept of a particular object in its relation to the inner truth of the universe which is affirmed by the doctrine of Abhimani Devata known to Hindu religious literature, which is as scientific as it is poetic. So, let us not run away with the feeling that when the poet is indulging in this divination of Nature, he is either roaming in the realms of pure fantasy or falling into the mire of illogicality.

When moral or spiritual qualities are ascribed to the inanimate objects of Nature, rhetoricians say that the poet who does so is using the figure of speech called 'Pathetic fallacy,' but it is neither pathetic nor is there any fallacy underlying it. Discussing this figure of speech, John Ruskin says in his *Modern Painters, Volume III*: 'The state of mind which attributes to it (Nature) these characters of a living creature is one in which the reason is unhinged by grief. All violent feelings have the same effect. They produce in us a falseness in all our impressions of external things, which I would generally characterize as the "Pathetic fallacy." ' But' he adds, 'if we look well into the matter we shall find the greatest poets do not often admit this kind of falseness.' Hence we find Kalidasa saying : 'The soul under the grip of highstrung emotion naturally flows out in compassion and inundates Nature, animate and inanimate alike.' There is no falseness about it. ("Kamarthahi Prakriti Kripana chetana chataneshu.")

There are many aspects of the truth or reality of an object. Science and sense-perception may reveal only one aspect of the whole truth. For example, while mathematics confines itself when counting oranges to their aspect as units, and physical science may view them only as composed of atoms or electrical charges, art reveals their color and beauty of outlines, and religion enunciates the truth of their relation to the sum-total of all objects--the universe. Kalidasa's noblest creation, Sakuntala, is the child reared in the lap of Nature. She is the intimate friend of the forest-creeper and the boon companion of the Ashrama deer. She is the foster-daughter not only of the sage Kanva but also of the divinities of the wood, and just as the sage feels intense sorrow on the occasion of his parting with Sakuntala, the Sylvan deities are said to feel poignant grief at her departure. The sage addresses them in the same manner as he would address Sakuntala's mother. To the poet's fancy a beautiful damsel and a creeper are objects alike of beauty. They are one in the aesthetic sense. One touch of magic will transform, as in the *Vikramorvasiya*, the damsel into a creeper. The creeper entwines itself round a tree, as the beloved would cling to her lover.

Man's relation to Nature in Kdalidasa is an aesthetic and spiritual oneness experienced by the realisation of the essential unity of the beauty, truth and joy of man's inner being with the beauty, truth and joy of Nature. One feels alike the play of the Unseen Hand in the joyful and beautiful aspects of Nature as in the workings of the feelings and emotions of the human personality. This conviction permeates the whole attitude of the poet to Nature. Looking at the vastness and grandeur of the sea, the poet exclaims: 'The boundless sea is as much beyond cognition as the form of Vishnu, the Lord of the Universe.' The Yaksha in the *Meghasandesha* appeals, in the fulness of his emotion, to the cloud for conveying his doleful message of love to his beloved in the distant city of Alaka. For, according to the poet, true emotion which holds a person in its grip and transforms his whole nature, knows no difference between animate objects imbued with feelings and inanimate Nature. Every human feeling or emotion, when it reaches the glory of its fulness and the acme of its perfection, becomes universalised and forms part of the nature of the Universal Spirit which pervades the whole of creation. The truth of this is well expressed by the *Srimad Bhagavata* when speaking of the universalised soul of Suka. The sage Vyasa called aloud for his son in grief, and the sound reverberated throughout the forest and found its echo in the trees of the forest. The poet, there, views man as the noblest work of God and as part of the same beautiful fabric of Nature, and feels convinced that man's heart beats always in unison with the heart of Nature. Speaking of Sakuntala, the poet says that, though fond of adorning herself with the flowers of creepers, she would desist from doing so on account of her affection for the creepers, lest she should deprive them of their ornamentation. It is this solicitude for her creeper-friends that is responsible for her self-abnegation. A similar feeling impels the saint under the vow of Ahimsa to refrain from plucking with his finger-nails the flowers and tender sprouts of trees and plants. It is the realisation of the essential unity of man with Nature that makes the poet transfer all the feelings, emotions and tastes of man to the objects around and make them animate with life and joy. It is the projection of man's personality, which is one with personality behind the universe, upon the aspects of Nature. In the *Meghasandesha*, the Yaksha holds out the joy of aesthetic appreciation to the cloud to induce it to make its long pilgrimage to the distant city of Alaka. He, therefore, says that the supreme aesthetic joy of appreciating the beauty of the play of moonlight on the balcony of a fine palace, which is denied to the cloud in every other part of the country, is fully available to the cloud if it happens to go to the city of Alaka. The moonlight there can never be hidden by the darkness of the clouds, for it proceeds from the moon on the head of Siva living in the suburbs of the city and not from the moon high up in Heaven. This is the significance in the selection of the city of Alaka as the destination for the cloud in the poem.

To Nature, 'red in tooth and claw,' however, he was indifferent. For, he saw in her only the beauty, joy and emotions of man. According to him, the truth of the Universe does not lie in the grim aberrations of Nature.

SCIENCE, GOD AND THE SOUL

Prof. I.V. CHALAPATI RAO

An anecdote appeared in the "Reader's Digest" long ago. A distinguished scientist delivered a scholarly lecture on "The Beginning of the World". In a patently atheistic approach he explained how eons ago the pounding of the pre-historic waves on the primeval crust had generated through physico-chemical reaction a pulsating scum from which there had come (though the professor did not say how) the first primitive form of animation, the protoplasmic cell. After the lecture he sat down. A boy stood up and asked: "Excuse me, Sir. You have explained how the big waves were beating upon the shore. But how did all that water get there in the first place?" The professor sat in awkward silence. Thereby hangs a tale. That can wait.

The truth is, in scientific investigation we do not find evidence to challenge the existence of God. We find a Supreme Intelligence (whatever we may call it) in primordial creation, in motivation of the universe and the operation of the natural laws. Sometimes science appears to be stranger than fiction. The behaviour of the stars and the planets and the regularity with which they move in their spheres/orbits, the transit of the Sun, the Moon and the Earth and the occurrence of eclipses should be watched with wonder.

The physical basis of life as Huxley terms it is, indeed, Protoplasm a substance which consists of four common elements, the three gases (Oxygen, Hydrogen and Nitrogen) and the non-metallic solid, carbon. But in its totality, the human body is a complex machine and a veritable wonder. In the language of Winston Churchill, it is "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." In spite of cornea grafts, heart transplants and test tube babies, no scientist has yet evolved the formula of fabricating the human body and injecting life into it.

In Plato's "Dialogue" a disciple (Crito) asked him how he should be disposed of after death on the following day, when he had to drink hemioc. He wanted him to specify whether he should be buried or cremated. Socrates replied with a smile, "Just as you please, if only you catch me". Does it not confirm his belief that there was something in him which could be neither interred nor incinerated? Plato said, "The

soul of man is the destined meeting place of the knowledge that comes from the matter and the knowledge (wisdom) that comes by looking inward. When he became blind Milton said, "My eyes are not lost; they have turned inwards". True light is within !

Long long ago, in ancient India, Maharshi Uddalaka once called his son Swethakethu, who was well-versed in all Shastras, and said, "Swethakethu, have you learnt that Shastra by learning which you can acquire the ability to understand anything ?" When the reply was in the negative, he imparted to him the secret of self-realization and Brahma Jnana which was the science of sciences. Krishna says in the Gita: "Thus has wisdom more secret than all secrets been declared to thee by me. Reflect on it fully and act according to thy choice".

It is wrong to think that pursuit of science and belief in God or the soul are incompatible. Roger Bacon, one of the great scientists of the 13th century, was put in prison for his so-called heretical views. The real prisoners of life were not the scientific thinkers whose bodies were fettered behind the iron bars but the dogmatists whose minds were manacled behind the bars of prejudice. Roger Bacon believed in God and pitied his jailors for the confinement of their souls. He said, "May God release them from the shackles of their ignorance." He wanted to strengthen his love of God by trying to unlock the secrets of His ways through science.

Copernicus, the great astronomer, desired to dedicate his life to the advancement of the world of God and to the contemplation of the works of God. He was prosecuted like Galileo after him who declared that the Earth moved round the Sun and the Sun did not turn round the Earth. Galileo who had to suffer for this at the hands of the inquisitors, was a pious Christian and narrowly missed joining the religious order. His first scientific discovery was made when he knelt in the church to pray to God. A sacristan had just filled a hanging oil lamp and left it swinging in the air. Galileo's prayer was interrupted by the tick-tack of the swinging lamp and the sound started him on a trail of ideals which eventually led to the discovery of the rhythmic principles of nature which today is applied to the counting of the human pulse, the measurement of time on the clock, the eclipses of the Sun, and the movement of the stars. (Henry Thomas and Dana Lee Thomas)

Newton, one of our greatest scientists, rightly said : "The fact that the universe is so beautifully designed in accordance with such harmonious laws, must presuppose the existence of a Divine wisdom, the hand of a Divine being". However he did not like to be involved in any argument about the nature of God. He frankly admitted, "I cannot frame a hypothesis about theological matters. I deal not with God but with His observable laws". No wonder, there is a beautiful couplet about him :

Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night.
God said : "Let there be Newton" and all was light.

Lavosier, the father of Chemistry, who was guillotined in 1794, during the Reign of Terror in France following the French Revolution, was a staunch believer in God. His last letter to his wife read, "Take care of your health, my dear, and remember that I finished my work. Thank God".

Dalton too believed in God. One of his favourite ideas was: "God ordered all things by measure, number, weight". In the course of his researches he found that in certain compounds of gaseous bodies the same elements are always combined in the same proportion. When Mr. Ransomen, his friend, drew his attention to the striking resemblance between him and Newton, and exclaimed: "What a miraculous resemblance!" Dalton said: "You see, my friend, it was the self-same mind that moulded the features for both of us". ('Living Biographies of Great Scientists'.)

Reverend Darwin, who was the most hated scientist for the religious fanatics or orthodox Christians for his scientific theory about the origin of man (as different from the Biblical myth), was not an atheist. He said "I am not very certain of my belief in God. But I am quite certain about my belief in man - I believe that in the distant future man will be a far more perfect creature. The whole subject is beyond the scope of man's intellect. But man can do his duty". George Bernard Shaw humorously said that Darwin did not declare that all men were monkeys previously but that some monkeys do not have tails today.

Huxley did not deny the existence of God. His favourite dictum was : "Teach a child what is wise and beautiful - that is religion". It is interesting to read his dialogue with a friend :

Friend: In this club most of us are atheists. We know there is no God.

Huxley: As for myself, I am merely an agnostic. I don't know (about immortality of the soul).

On another occasion he said : "The philosophy of Carlyle has taught me that a deep sense of religion is quite compatible with the entire absence of theology".

Natural scientists like poets (Kalidasa or Wordsworth) appreciated the beauty of nature as a reflection of God's glory. Agassiz, the natural scientist, was of the view that the order of nature was not mechanical but purposeful, not the accident of a blind force but the design of a Supreme intellect. He regarded his scientific vocation as a priesthood. His own museum was his church. "It is the business of the prophets and the scientists alike to declare the glory of God", he said. Mendel, the plant specialist who discovered the law of heredity, was elected the Abbot of the Monastery at Altbrunn. On festival days like the Corpus Christi Day and the day of St. Thomas, he used to feed and entertain the entire neighbourhood.

The great Einstein himself believed in Science and did not deny the existence of God. If God is Truth, the scientist who pursues truth is His sincere devotee. There are always certain things which Science cannot explain. When we sit on the bed-side of a dying relative and almost hear the beating of the wings of inexorable Death, when we watch the miracle of birth and when we, not unoften, see the effects without visible causes, our rational ego will be deflated.

Goethe said : "It often seems to me as though an invisible genius was whispering something rhythmical to me so that on my walks always I keep step to it and at the same time fancy I hear soft tones accompanying some song (*Life of Goethe* written by Bielschowsty, translated by W.A.Coor). Schiller said: "With me conception has at first no definite or clear object. This comes later. A certain musical state of mind precedes it and this is then followed by the poetic idea". (Schmitz, L.D. "Correspondence between Schiller and Goethe"). How can we disbelieve when it was claimed that God himself appeared before Pothana and Thygaraja and induced them to write their immortal works? Can we dismiss them as men of vague inspiration or hallucinations, or "Intellectual over-heating." Our ancient Rishis were scientists of the Soul investigating the truth about life and death - a new area for research. There are immense possibilities even now.

Meditation is more scientific than religious. It has beneficial effects on body and mind besides being a spiritual pursuit. Meditation is not the monopoly of sages and saints. It will unfold that infinite riches lying latent in the human mind and will foster a frictionless flow of creative intelligence in the practitioner. Scientists have described this state of "restful alertness" as a fourth major state of consciousness which is physiologically and psychologically different from "waking", "sleeping" and "dreaming". In this condition of greatly depleted metabolism along with the resultant "alert calmness of mind", the body will carry out certain adjustment processes which are not possible during activity or less deep rest of sleep.

The result is freedom from tension, stress and fatigue. It also releases mental clarity and abundant energy. Fools take recourse to drinks and drugs to control the brain. Meditation does it in a marvellous manner. As Satya Sai Baba said from his illuminated consciousness "Peace flows out of a rhythmic breath and a steady heart beat through management of thoughts, breath and time".

In *Aparokshanubhuti* (Direct Revelation), Sankaracharya says, "The negation of the universe is the outgoing breath (*Rechaka*). The thought "I am Brahman" is the incoming breath (*Puraka*) and the steadiness of that thought may be called *Kumbhaka* (restraining the breath)." Then with a gentle show of pleasant humour he added, "This is the real course of Pranayama for the enlightened, whereas the ignorant only torture the nose". Most of the Yoga aspirants torture their noses without

realising that Yoga means "Yoking the mind to God". This is the profound vision and not the meaningless gaze that it directed to the tip of the nose.

We should realise that spiritual values are also human values. According to the scriptures the attributes of God are synonymous with the attributes of the human soul. They are: (1) pure and unallayed joy (2) Everlastingness (3) perfect knowledge (Jnana) (4) Absolute liberty and (5) Complete suzerainty. According to Jagadguru Sankaracharya of Puri, this proves psycho-structural oneness of God and man. It is therefore natural that all human beings should strive to attain Godhead by seeking within themselves.

THE REALITY

AJNEYA

(Translated from the original in Hindi by
Dr. Ravi S. Varma)

Whenever a fish
writhes and wriggles in the sea
we comprehend its depth.

Whenever a meteor
shoots and falls from the sky
we realize space is boundless.

Whatever exists
is mystery inscrutable
existence is its own proof.

Every occurrence
the object of knowledge
sets its limit and its measure.

All that exists
and all that occurs
rests in the lap of Eternity.

Knowledge gropes for apprehension
turns and twists
moves on and then discards all.

The reality lies not in the sea
but in the fish
that it ensnares.

It is the sea
that invokes us
and not we.

BHARATIDASAN'S CONCEPT OF NATURE AND BEAUTY

DR. V. AYOTHI

In his brief introduction to *Alakin Cirippu*, Bharatidasan writes, "All Nature is beauty. And that beauty manifests itself as a lotus, as the moon and as rays and smiles. . . ." *Alakin Cirippu* shines as a very good illustration of this concept of Beauty. It contains a string of 16 poems and lyrics portraying the eternal beauty of nature from various angles. Through these lyrics the poet reveals himself as a romanticist, a realist, and as a symbolist. A rich store of images are found in them. Every poem is a painting of an aspect of the landscape; the only difference is that the poet has used a pen and words instead of a brush and colours. When we read the poem, we feel as though we are travelling with a "high priest" of nature who has established constant communion with nature and knows everything about nature. He acts as a sincere guide and explains the various aspects of nature to us.

The first song entitled "Beauty" personifies Beauty as a damsel and the poet finds her in all objects of Nature :

In the tender morning sun I found her;
In the vast expanse of the sea, in the shimmering waters
In the grove, flowers, and in sprouts
Wherever I touched she was visible :
In the melting ruby rays of the even-sun,
In the avenues of banyan trees, in the branches
And amidst the crowd of parrots
That Dame Beauty offered poetry.

She stood like the light that flames the eyes of the child ;
In the holy lamp she smiles ;
In the twitsting fingers of the lass
Who weaves a garland of flowers, she acts ;
She rejoices in the majestic walk of the farmer
Whose shoulder bears the plough.
In the ripe paddy fields she fastens my eyes;

She dwells in my heart and makes me happy.
 The direction I saw ; the sky I saw,
 And I found the infinite variety enshrined within.
 All that is in motion and still eternally, I found ;
 I found Beauty, I found joy.
 Look, she is the pulp behind all that is green.
 Neither age nor tradition can wither her.
 Look around with love, she is everywhere;
 If you surrender to her, you won't have sorrows.

("Beauty" 5)

In the ensuing pages the poet presents alluring pictures of ocean, breeze, forest, mountain, river, lotus, the sun, the sky, banyan tree, pigeons, parrots and even darkness. He also sings of the village, the town and of Tamil in the last three parts of the book.

"The Ocean" describes the beauty of the sea and the shore. The reference here is to the Bay of Bengal which is in the east of Pondicherry, the birthplace of the poet. The following lines show how the poet enjoyed the sight of the beautiful beach at Pondicherry.

Look, younger brother !
 The sand bed all along the edge of the ocean
 In the east of the town
 Looks like a mongoose ;
 The waves that climb on it
 Rise in exultation, fall and roll
 Like the youth at school.

 The sea water and the blue sky
 Join hands; the flood
 Lying between them is a beautiful harp
 The wind that blows on it
 Is the bard who plays on the strings
 To create joy. Brother,
 Hear the melodious song of the mellifluous sea !

("The Ocean" 6,8)

The rising sun brings light and life on the earth.

The tender sun rose up ;
 And steered his anger towards darkness ;
 The birds of the sea were joyous
 And sprang up clapping their hands ;

Pitch darknes hid herself ;
 To make the heart bloom with joy,
 The tender sun showers everywhere
 The golden hue.

("The Ocean" 8)

The Tamils have given different names to the breeze blowing from four directions. The northern breeze is called 'vadal' ; the breeze from the west is called 'kodai' ; from the east blows 'kondai'. The southern breeze called 'thenral' is welcomed by everyone due to its soothing nature. Bharatidasan beautifully describes the nature and activities of the Southern breeze.

The Southern breeze is seen waving the hair on the forehead of the flowery face of children. It is seen dancing on the soft little petals of flowers. It plays with children. It cools the eyes; wherever it goes as a guest, it serves as a balm which alleviates the heat of summer. It spreads everywhere the sweet fragrance of radiant flowers and sandalwood. It blows the flame in the furnace of the blacksmith and imparts cools to his body while he works near the furnace. Hence everyone welcomes the breeze. Even when the breeze takes the liberty to remove the dress that women wear, they do not get wild and set it aside. The poet is of the opinion that men do not possess even a little quantity of the wisdom embodied in it.

Mother Pothigai
 Who grows the tall coconuts
 the areca and the fragrant sandalwood
 Yielded you; yielded Tamil;
 Tamil gives joy to my soul;
 And you Southerly, soothe my body;
 Shall I forget you, even in dream?

("Southern Breeze" 13)

Afforestation has become the slogan of the day. If we preserve forests, they will bless us with riches and rains. Moreover forest is a part of nature where Beauty lives joyfully. Therefore, Bharatidasan adores the forest. When the hard realities of life frighten us and tire us and to get ourselves relieved from the stresses and strains that we pick up during the course of our daily routine, we get into the forest at the outskirts of the city. The beauties of the forest can console us and revitalise our body and mind.

In one of the poems, the poet describes a beautiful sight seen by him in the forest :

Seeing its spouse, hen,
 the cock ran to her;
 A crowd of mosquitoes rose

disturbed by the feather of the cock
 Mistaking this crowd as cloud
 the peacock spread its full-grown feathers

.....
 The bear came and greeted the peacock.
 ("Forest" 17)

Like the American poet, Robert Frost, Bharatidasan finds that
 "the woods are lovely dark and deep."

But, however, being a humanist he is often reminded of his
 obligation to the society. He never forgot that he had "promises to keep
 and miles to go."

The high mountain known for its flora and fauna has always been
 a source of inspiration to the poet. He describes the beautiful sight of the
 streams that jump down the slopes of the hills, bunches of colourful
 flowers and the birds that hum around.

Streams are diamond garlands!
 Thick creepers are green silk garments!
 Sparrows are lump of gold!
 The frigid flower is a heap of pearls!
 The tiger that attacks the bull
 is like lighting over the moon.
 Dried leaves are glittering plates of gold
 Behold the beautiful scene!
 ("Mountain" 18)

The sky offers different shades of beauty on different occasions:
 the dawn, the day, the midday, the dusk, the night, the midnight. The
 sunny day, and the rainy day. To Bharatidasan the high and wide sky
 symbolizes high thinking and broadmindedness. People should never
 differentiate themselves as high and low. All are equal on earth. This idea
 is emphatically expressed by the poet in the following lines :

How big the sky is!
 Think of you yourself!
 This earth is a small green guava
 You are just a small ant in it
 All, indeed, are
 like that only, isn't it, dear?
 Why should the people
 Blab like mad men as high and low?
 ("The Sky" 10)

Like Wordsworth, Bharatidasan considers nature as a teacher.
 The relationship between these poets and nature is mostly dualistic.
 Both would like to read books in running brooks and sermons in stones.
 They consider nature as an abundant source of energy and vitality which
 has to be harnessed for the benefit of humanity. One who loves nature
 receives peace and joy in return as a reward.

Bharatidasan's concern for humanity sometimes causes a difference in his attitude towards nature. While Wordsworth just enjoys the calmness and tranquillity of the starry sky :

The silence that is the starry sky
The sleep that is among the lonely hill.

Bharatidasan, getting obsessed with the suffering and sorrows of fellow human beings writes thus :

All those who toil on earth
Are poor ! If they seek their rights,
The rich pierce an arrow into their wounds
The vast sky that witnesses this in the day
Expresses its anguish in the night
Through the boils of stars !
Behold, younger brother !

("The Sky" 1)

The vast expanse of the sky symbolizes unity, oneness and equality.

"The Purakkal" (The Doves) included in *Alakin Cirippu* serves as a good example to teach men the need for consistency in their relationship. The one-man-one-woman relationship is strongly supported by Bharatidasan. As an analogy he presents a pair of doves and they are shown to be constant and faithful in their love for each other. None of them is enticed by the beauty of a different dove. The poet asserts that the love-birds cannot be separated from each other till death. The poet ironically remarks that any mark of inconsistency among birds, if noted, must be attributed to its copying of human beings. He makes it clear here that only men and women have to learn a lot from nature without trying to pollute nature. Nature has nothing to learn from human beings.

Like Wordsworth, Bharatidasan seeks to establish harmony between nature and man. The primrose and the daffodil are symbols of nature's message to man. He believes that man can get lessons from nature for his edification if he brings with him, "a heart that watches and receives" and leaves behind his "meddling intellect that murders to dissect." To Bharatidasan and Wordsworth nature appeals as a permeative influence superior to anything else, the educator of senses and mind alike, the sower in our hearts of the deep-laid seeds of our feelings and belief.

Even "Darkness" has a role to play in the scheme of the universe and therefore we see Bharatidasan writing a poem about "Darkness" and includes it in the list of beautiful things. Darkness lies at the bottom of each petal of a lotus flower and serves to identify the petals by providing a three-dimensional effect. A bright or white spot on a bright background would be invisible; but a dark background would enhance the visibility of the spot. In the same way shade and darkness, by a

method of contrast, define the features very clearly. Darkness dwells in the two sides of the beautiful nose of a damsel; it is also there in the edge of her eye balls, in the centre of her ears and mouth. It only animates identity. The painters know how to use darkness to make features of their painting attractive and clear. According to the poet, ignorance is the springboard of knowledge. In one way darkness is more powerful than light because light cannot beget darkness but darkness can beget light.

Bharatidasan considers even villages and cities as parts of nature. To him "pattinam" (city) is a living monument of man's achievements in science and arts. He appreciates the workmanship of the man and the continuous progress of mankind. He praises the technological advancement made in this century and thinks that only man is capable of handing down to posterity all knowledge he has accumulated. Thus the city exhibits the beauty of artifice.

To Bharatidasan, a village represents the beauty of nature. The green grass, the colourful flowers covered with dew drops, the cows, cowherds, the grove, the various kinds of plants and trees and the playful animals and birds amidst them, the fields, the peasant - all capture the attention of the poet. Nature knows no distinction among men as high and low. It is a lesson in socialism that one has to learn from nature. Before the omnipresent nature man is after all a small thing. Why should he be proud of his possession and position? Man must learn to suppress his ego and live peacefully with his fellowmen.

IT GOES ON

Dr. R. JANARDANA RAO

Life eroded with vain vapours of emotion
Spent away in living, ego bloated, sight lost
Blood, breath, bread, wasted in pursuit pleasures
Purposeless, the waves battering beaches
It goes on meandering, places unchartered.

Twists, turns, changes, incomprehensible
Pains, thrusts, pillories, stinging life
The odyssey persists, wherefrom, whereto
None to hear nor converse with the silent still.

Lone I entered, tired and lone I leave
Humming ever with the silent song
None to comprehend, none to share
One seat only to reign and feign.

Vain all the efforts prove, as remembered
Voyages of pleasures, sorrows, recollected
Vain aspirations cherished so fond
The wick wanting, slumbering groans, go on.

The caravan goes in spite of me
With eyes closed, and breath bating
Triggering action to action, the wheel
Of life goes on and on, to me unknown.

Life's bashings, bulging, battering forces
Beyond control, but steered by someone
A spectator, a seer, a sufferer, the man,
And his life spills on and on unknown.

PHILOSOPHY OF COMMONISM SOME IMPLICATIONS

Prof. Dr. G.C. NAYAK

I advocate what I call philosophy of "Common-ism". I must make it clear at the outset that Common-ism, of which I write here, has nothing to do with Communism propagated by Marx, Lenin and others. Common-ism, as envisaged by me, has evidently no connection with dialectical materialism, nor does it subscribe to Marxist ontology or any other form. Common-ism is a simple and a very straightforward doctrine which highlights the unique significance of the commonplace, the common man, the common articles of the world, the ordinary, the secular, and even the so-called unholy. It is anti-essentialist and anti-absolutist in its outlook, whereas communism has its origin and basis in the absolutist metaphysics of Hegel. Common-ism, therefore, needs to be clearly distinguished from Communism with which it may get confused.

Whether one agrees with this philosophy or not, let us see what is being done, what is at issue, here. The distinction between the common and the un-common, the ordinary and extra-ordinary, the ignorant and the knowledgeable is acknowledged to be significant and useful at one level, in our ordinary parlance, while it is challenged at another level of thought. It is pointed out that the distinction as it is known to us is practically useful perhaps, but it does not hold good in all possible circumstances. A conceptual remapping is suggested where "uncommon" gets its requisite value in and through the "common", the "extra-ordinary" gets its due recognition only in and through the "ordinary".

The distinction which has appeared or has been made to appear for some particular purpose to be a distinction in kind or even perhaps an absolute one is now seen to be simply pragmatic in its import, having no higher authenticity. Does it mean that this typical philosophical experimentation with ideas will make our ordinary distinctions vanish out of existence by a fiat or make the distinction somewhat blurred? Certainly not. It is meant to bring certain features to relief that were not prominent beforehand and to point out that these distinctions have only a limited use and are not sacrosanct in another plane of thought. It is a case of conceptual experiment, a conceptual exercise carried out with a purpose. The point which I drive at is as follows.

Difference will persist between great and small, wise and ignorant, but this will be seen to be simply a functional difference without any rigidity or absolutistic bias. Viewed from this perspective we have to reassess the well-known distinctions such as "ignorant - wise", "great - small", "respectable - despicable", etc. Once it is seen that there are no immutably fixed characteristics because of which one is to be honoured or dishonoured, importance attached to some as against others will be seen to be simply functional. This philosophy, if taken seriously, will bring about certain fundamental and revolutionary change in our outlook, in our thought-process as well as in the evaluation of persons and social institutions.

It is likely to impel us to search for new values in the so-called insignificant things, the outcastes, the outmoded, the downtrodden and the neglected. Consequently we are likely to search for and develop a sense of respect for the so-called useless things or persons for some of their inherent qualities. The responsibility will lie on us, the so-called enlightened, for unfolding these inherent qualities in the ordinary objects or the unenlightened laity for the good of mankind. Nothing is absolutely useless or despicable.

This, according to me, could also be regarded as the inherent import of the famous Vedantic statement, "*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*". Importance can be attached to everything considering our practical needs as well as capacity which differ from man to man and are likely to change according to circumstances. Here is a proposal for the replacement of a static, photographic, view of things based on an essentialist metaphysics by a non-essentialist and dynamic view of things and values.

The situation, however, in almost all the countries of the world, even now, is not very much different from that which obtained at the time of Antisthenes or Alexander. Antisthenes, when people told him that one Ismenias was an excellent piper, said, "It may be so, but he is but a wretched human being, otherwise he would not have been an excellent piper", and King Phillip told his son Alexander, who once at a merry-meeting played a piece of music charmingly and skilfully, "Are you not ashamed, son, to play so well? (*Plutarch's Lives*, Translated by John Dryden)

Negligence of the commonplace and the ordinary, and an exaggerated infatuation for the uncommon and extraordinary is an age-old disease of humanity. An all-round development of the society including the common mass will remain a day-dream unless this disease is properly diagnosed and brought under control by propagation of the common-istic philosophy. That is why I consider this philosophy to be the bedrock of democracy in the true sense of the term, of a democracy which is really meant for the people. Monopolistic outlook with an essentialist bias is deep-rooted in the human mind and society, and is

consequently reflected also in our administrative set-up. Its reflection is no less evident in our educational system, daily life and practice.

Our educational system is not well-equipped to provide adequate opportunity for unfolding the inherent potentialities of the ordinary, the so-called backward students. Thousands of innocent children undergo mental torture. They are continuously humiliated as well as neglected in the so-called age of science simply because they cannot fit into the procrustian bed of our educational curriculum which is meant only to take care of a handful of students endowed with a specific talent and aptitude. Educational curriculum envisaged under the common-istic scheme should be able to provide opportunity for the manifestation of the potential capacity of even the so-called third-rate student. No rating is absolutely sacrosanct after all, and rating, evaluation, assessment, etc., are done only with a particular end in view.

It has become customary, for example, to underestimate students who have proved themselves failures, say, in Literature or Mathematics. But neither Literature nor Mathematics is the be-all and the end-all of human existence. Other openings, say in painting, fine arts, dancing, music, etc., need to be explored for those so-called third-rate students who have been stamped to be third-rate simply because they are not good at Mathematics or Literature. But this is possible only when ordinary and backward students get their due recognition in our educational set-up, and it can materialise only when the stronghold of intellectual aristocracy tumbles under the pressure of a common-istic concern for every so-called Tom, Dick, and Harry. This is only one of the possible applications of Common-istic thought in our educational set-up. There could be other applications too which cannot be discussed here on account of want of space.

What is important is to realise that most of our evils in the society are due to an inherent absolutist and essentialist bias which has created a mental blockade even in the case of the best of our men throughout the ages. This most dangerous bias needs to be eradicated, step by step, if not suddenly, by a conscious and continuous propagation of what I have designated as common-istic philosophy.

A KING AND A POET

B. INDIRA KUMARI

One was born in a mansion
And in a cottage another one.
Both grew in places of their own
Having between no relation.
One tasted the life's smoothness
The other the adversity's sweetness.
One by hereditary became a king
The other as good poet did sing.
Glows with gems the king's palace
In simplicity smiles the poet's residence.
The king's tone commands each and everyone
But from poet's pen verses flow on and on.
They did know each other
But none for either did care.
For, more each one did in life
Respect each one's dear self.
In fear do, the people honour the king.
But freedom and love the poet's glory sing.
To serve the king only the paid are bound,
But service comes to poet, from all around
The king's sword rains the blood
But the poet's pen begets beauty's world.
This whole world the king may reign
But the poet can rule even the Divine.
With himself dies the king's name
But rises to heights the poet's fame.
Only as a statue the king stands
But in the people's memory the poet ever lives.

(Translated by the author from Telugu)

THE QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT

(We are celebrating this year the 50th anniversary of the most decisive event in the history of our freedom struggle, the "Quit India Movement". Mahatma Gandhi gave a clarion call to the nation - "Everyone is free to go to the fullest length under Ahimsa. Complete deadlock by strikes and other non-violent means. Satyagrahis must go on to die, not to live. They must seek and face death. It is only when individuals go out to die that the nation will survive." The full text of the resolution is reproduced hereunder. Let us also recapitulate what our great leaders said about it. —Editor)

The All India Congress Committee has given the most careful consideration to the reference made to it by the Working Committee in their resolution dated 14 July 1942 and to subsequent events, including the development of the war situation, the utterances of responsible spokesmen of the British Government, and the comments and criticisms made in India and abroad. The Committee approves of and endorses that resolution and is of opinion that events subsequent to it have given it further justification, and have made it clear that the immediate ending of British rule in India is an urgent necessity, both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. The continuation of that rule is degrading and enfeebling India and making her progressively less capable of defending herself and of contributing to the cause of world freedom.

The Committee has viewed with dismay the deterioration of the situation on the Russian and Chinese fronts and conveys to the Russian and Chinese peoples its high appreciation of their heroism in defence of their freedom. This increasing peril makes it incumbent on all those who strive for freedom, and who sympathise with the victims of aggression, to examine the foundations of the policy so far pursued by the Allied Nations, which have led to repeated and disastrous failure. It is not by adhering to such aims and policies and methods that failure can be converted into success, for past experience has shown that failure is

inherent in them. These policies have been based not on freedom so much as on domination of subject and colonial countries and the continuation of the imperialist tradition and method.

The possession of empire, instead of adding to the strength of the ruling power, has become a burden and a curse. India, the classic land of modern imperialism, has become the crux of the question, for by the freedom of India will Britain and the United Nations be judged, and the people of Asia and Africa be filled with hope and enthusiasm. The ending of British rule in this country is thus a vital and immediate issue on which depend the future of the war and the success of freedom and democracy. A free India will assure the success by throwing all her great resources in the struggle for freedom and against the aggression of nazism, fascism and imperialism. This will not only affect materially the fortunes of the war, but will bring all subjected and oppressed humanity on the side of the United Nations, and give these Nations, whose ally India would be, the moral and spiritual leadership of the world. India in bondage will continue to be the symbol of British imperialism and the taint of that imperialism will affect the fortunes of all the United Nations.

The peril of today, therefore, necessitates the independence of India and the ending of British domination. No future promises or guarantees can affect the present situation or meet that peril. They cannot produce the needed psychological effect on the mind of the masses. Only the glow of freedom now can release that energy and enthusiasm of millions of people which will immediately transform the nature of the war.

The AICC therefore repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British power from India. On the declaration of India's independence, a Provisional Government will be formed and Free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The Provisional Government can only be formed by the cooperation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite government, representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the nonviolent forces at its command, together with its allied powers, to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere to whom essentially all power and authority must belong.

The Provisional Government will evolve a scheme for a Constituent Assembly which will prepare a Constitution for the Government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. This Constitution according to the Congress view should be a federal one, with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units, and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied Nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free

countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their cooperation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it .

The freedom of India must be the symbol of and prelude to the freedom of all other Asiatic Nations under foreign dominations. Burma, Malaya, Indo-China, the Dutch Indies, Iran, Iraq must also attain their complete freedom. It must be clearly understood that such of these countries as are under Japanese control now must not subsequently be placed under the rule of control of any other colonial power.

While the AICC must primarily be concerned with the independence and defence of India in this hour of danger, the Committee is of opinion that the future peace, security and ordered progress of the world demand a World Federation of free nations, and on no other basis can the problems of the modern world be solved. Such a World Federation would ensure the freedom of its constituent nations, the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and peoples, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all. On the establishment of such a World Federation, disarmament would be practicable in all countries, national armies, navies and air forces would no longer be necessary, and a World Federal Defence Force would keep the world peace and prevent aggression.

An independent India would gladly join such a World Federation and cooperate on an equal basis with other nations in the solution of international problems.

Such a Federation should be open to all nations who agree with its fundamental principles. In view of the war, however, the Federation must inevitably, to begin with, be confined to the United Nations. Such a step taken now will have a most powerful effect on the war, on the peoples of the Axis countries, and on the peace to come.

The Committee regretfully realises, however, that despite the tragic and overwhelming lessons of the war and the perils that over-hang the world, the governments of few countries are yet prepared to take this inevitable step towards World Federation. The reaction of the British Government and the misguided criticisms of the foreign press also make it clear that even the obvious demand for India's independence is resisted, though this has been made essentially to meet the present peril and to enable India to defend herself and help China and Russia in their hour of need. The Committee is anxious not to embarrass in any way the defence of China or Russia, whose freedom is precious and must be preserved, or to jeopardise the defensive capacity of the United Nations, and inaction and submission to a foreign administration at this stage is not only degrading India and reducing her capacity to defend herself

and resist aggression, but is no answer to that growing peril and is no service to the people of the United Nations. The earnest appeal of the Working Committee to Great Britain and the United Nations has so far met with no response, and criticisms made in many foreign quarters have shown an ignorance of India's and the world's need, and sometimes even hostility to India's freedom which is significant of mentality of domination and racial superiority which cannot be tolerated by a proud people conscious of their strength and of the justice of their cause.

The AICC would yet again, at this last moment, in the interest of world freedom, renew this appeal to Britain and the United Nations. But the Committee feels that it is no longer justified in holding the nation back from endeavouring to assert its will against an imperialist and authoritarian government which dominates over it and prevents it from functioning in its own interest and in the interest of humanity. The Committee resolves, therefore, to sanction for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale, so that the country might utilise all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last 22 years of peaceful struggle. Such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhiji and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken.

The Committee appeals to the people of India to face the dangers and hardships that will fall to their lot with courage and endurance, and to hold together under the leadership of Gandhiji, and carry out his instructions as disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom. They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress Committee can function. When this happens, every man and woman, who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India.

Lastly, whilst the AICC has stated its own view of the future government under free India, the AICC wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on mass struggle it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power when it come, will belong to the whole people of India.

Mahatma Gandhi on Quit India Resolution

I... want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had. Freedom cannot now wait for the realization of communal unity. If that unity is not achieved, sacrifices necessary for it will have to be much greater than would have otherwise sufficed. But the Congress must win freedom or be wiped out in the effort. And forget not that the

freedom which the Congress is struggling to achieve will not be for the Congressmen alone but for all the forty crores of the Indian people. Congressmen must forever remain humble servants of the people....

...In Satyagraha, there is no place for fraud or falsehood, or any kind of untruth. Fraud and untruth today are stalking the world. I cannot be a helpless witness to such a situation. I have travelled all over India as perhaps nobody in the present age has. The voiceless millions of the land saw in me their friend and representative, and I identified myself with them to an extent it was possible for a human being to do. I saw trust in their eyes, which I now want to turn to good account in fighting this Empire upheld on untruth and violence. However gigantic the preparations that the Empire has made, we must get out of its clutches. How can I remain silent at this supreme hour and hide my light under the bushel? Shall I ask the Japanese to tarry a while? If today I sit quiet and inactive, God will take me to task for not using up the treasure He had given me, in the midst of the conflagration that is enveloping the whole world. Had the condition been different, I should have asked you to wait yet a while. But the situation now has become intolerable, and the Congress has no other course left for it....

...Here is a Mantra, a short one, that I give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The Mantra is: 'Do or Die'. We shall either free India or die in the attempt; we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery. Every true Congressman or (Congress) woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. Let that be your pledge. Keep jails out of your consideration. If Government keeps me free, I will spare you the trouble of filling the jails. I will not put on the Government the strain of maintaining a large number of prisoners at a time when it is in trouble. Let every man and woman live every moment of his or her life hereafter in the consciousness that he or she eats or lives for achieving freedom and will die, if need be, to attain that goal. Take a pledge with God and your own conscience as witness, that you will gain it; he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the coward or the faint-hearted.

In the words of Jawaharlal Nehru.....

I hate poverty. My grievance against the British is that they have made Indians miserable, poverty-stricken wrecks of humanity. We are now taking a step from which there will be no going back. If there is goodwill on the other side, then everything would be all right and the whole course of the War and the future of the world would be changed. The change would be not merely emotional but in the material sense also. But that is not to be. There might be some difficulty. It is my conviction that this resolution is the only way, the effective way, in which we can help China and Russia and I know how terrible the situation is there. Britain and America must change their whole conception of the War. It is no good looking at Asia as a side-show. Asia is the centre of the War and it is Asia that is going to determine the final result of the War.

Therefore, I want to prepare today, even at some risk and peril, so that the final result of the War should be the right kind of result. We must go forward even though it involves certain perils. I should like my friends, who do not agree with this resolution or who do not try to understand it, to respect our bonafides. People should realise that if there is any trouble in India, it is we who would suffer. If there is internal trouble or an external invasion by Japan, it is we who would suffer. England might be distantly affected but we will have to die immediately. The problem of meeting aggression concerns us deeply. How can I, after seeing the incompetence of the Government, trust them? Their whole attitude is one of retreat. We, however, want to be valiant fighters. It is not a narrow nationalist resolution. I am proud of Indian nationalism because it is broadbased and has an international background...

...The movement contemplated is not for merely achieving national ends but for achieving world freedom. The Congress is plunging into a stormy ocean and it would emerge either with a free India or go down. Unlike in the past, it is not going to be a movement for a few days, to be suspended and talked over. It is going to be a fight to the finish. The Congress has now burnt its boats and is about to embark on a desperate campaign. I can never persuade myself to work with a Government which has neither vision nor intelligence. Nor would I remain a passive spectator of the great happenings that are taking place in the world. It appears to me, perhaps, I would live in eternal opposition to the Axis powers. I repudiate the suggestion that the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi are bargaining and haggling. In moments of excitement people are prone to say certain things, but this should not be dubbed as bargaining. How, by granting India's independence, would the war efforts of the United Nations be hampered or how would chaos and anarchy follow in India? The resolution does not give out even one-tenth of the real feelings of the Indians towards the British Government....

...What is the resolution? You have seen and read it. It is not a threat. It is an offer of cooperation. It is all that. It is not a threat but still behind it there is the obvious warning that certain consequences will follow if certain events do not happen. It is an offer of cooperation but of a free India with other free peoples. There is going to be no cooperation on any other terms. On any other terms this resolution can only promise conflict and struggle. Let that be clear. Some of our friends abroad may think that we are acting unwisely. I do not blame them. They move in their own environment. I want them to realise what we are saying. We are in dead earnest about the course we are going to adopt. Let there be no doubt about it. You may occasionally cheer and clap but the fact is that we are on the brink of a precipice and we are in dead earnest about it. I think this resolution of ours is not only a resolution of the All India Congress Committee but it does represent as on many other occasions our resolutions have represented the voice of India. I would even go a step further and say that it represents the voice of the

entire oppressed humanity. If, by a miracle, Britain had accepted this resolution and acted according to its demands you would have seen such a wonderful change, not only in India but all over the world. It would have changed the whole nature of the War. It would have given it a real revolutionary background which it does not bear today.

What Subhas Chandra Bose Said

Comrades ! Since I spoke to you last, about two weeks ago, the movement in India has been continuing with unabated vigour, and has been spreading like wild fire from the towns to the countryside. Throughout the month the British propaganda machinery has tried to give the impression that the campaign is now subsiding and that things are quietening down. But this attempt has completely failed, because in the same breath the B.B.C. and its agents have given or rather have been forced to give, news of more shooting on unarmed men and women all over the country. I can assure you that in the year of grace 1942, India can no longer be isolated from the rest of the world, however much Britain may try to draw a veil over that land. As a matter of fact every bit of news regarding India's national struggle, every incident in Indian towns and villages, every case of shooting, whether in Ramnad or in Wardha, in Bikrampore or in Lucknow, is immediately flashed all over the world, is broadcast over the radio and published in the Press in all those countries that are either hostile to the Allied Powers or are neutral. Comrades, I know very well how in all the previous campaigns we were hard put to it to inform the outside world about the happenings in India and about the atrocities committed by British imperialists. Today the problem does not exist and it is my pleasant task to keep the outside world informed about all events in India and to secure all the sympathy and help that India may need in her hour of trial. If today you could see with your own eyes and hear with your own ears all that is being propagated by your friends abroad about India's epic struggle, you would realize the measure of sympathy that India is receiving from the enemies of British Imperialism. And this sympathy for India is bound to grow in volume and intensity as British terror and brutality increases.

The more we suffer and the more we sacrifice in the pursuit of our national freedom, the more will India's prestige go up in the eyes of the world.

I should like to tell you further while we have gained the moral sympathy of public opinion throughout the world, it is also possible for us to obtain from abroad any help that we may need for our emancipation. Therefore, in the fight against all the modern forms of terror and brutality, if you feel overwhelmed at any time and if you desire your friends abroad to give you the hand of assistance, you have only to say so. But these friends, who are anxious to see India free, will not offer their help to you, so long as you do not need it, and for our national honour and self-interest, we should not ask for any assistance so long as we can do without it.

In this connection, I would appeal to you once again to trust fully your countrymen abroad who are working heart and soul with us for the

speedy liberation of India. We are today the custodians of India's national honour, the unofficial ambassadors of free India. As at home, so also abroad, we stand always for Independence, and we shall never permit vital encroachments on our national sovereignty by any foreign power....

...In this critical hour strategy should consist in continuing the fight for our independence regardless of the consequences. The British Empire will soon collapse and break up as a result of shattering defeats in all the theatres of war. And when the final dismemberment of the empire takes place, power will automatically come into the hands of the Indian people. Our final victory will come as a result of our efforts alone.

Consequently, it does not matter in the least if we in India suffer temporary set-backs, specially when we are confronted with machine-guns, bombs, tanks and aeroplanes. Our task is to continue the national struggle in spite of all obstacles and set-backs till the hour of liberation arrives.

There is no cause to be depressed because the leaders are imprisoned. On the contrary, their sufferings will serve as perpetual inspiration to the entire nation. Moreover, those who are now away from the field of action have given you the plan that has to be executed by you now...

...In conclusion, I must point out that the campaign in India should be carried out for weeks and if necessary for months. If the non-violent guerilla war should continue sufficiently long, freedom will come because British Imperialism will ultimately break down owing to the cumulative effect of defeats sustained on different fronts. Do not forget for one moment that the British Empire is now on its last legs.

At the same time, be prepared for every suffering because the apostles of freedom and democracy and the authors of the Atlantic Charter may do their very worst in the days to come. Before dawn comes the darkest hour. Be brave and continue the struggle, for freedom is at hand. Let your slogans be 'Now or never', 'Victory or Death', 'Inquilab Zindabad'.

(Courtesy : A.I.C.C. Office)

THE JOURNEY

SANTOSH, M.P.

the bus crawls slowly.
heat waves mixed with dust fumes
hit your face
warm sunlight oozing
the sweat out of your body
the glass panels rattle to
the rhythm of the bumpy tracks.
the crowd help in keeping out the fresh air
as drowsy heads drop on your shoulder.
sleep persists but a slight headache
insists you to stay awake.
at last you reach your destination and
you get out with a song of
relief and liberation.

isn't life a similar bus?
you travel in it.
you face the ordeals.
you are put to the ultimate test.
you are freed from it one fine day.

and after a while you are ready
for yet another long and tiring journey ...

THE AGE RUNNER (Short Story)

PEDDIBHOTLA SUBBARAMAIAH

(Translated from Telugu by Vallampati Venkata Subbaiah).

A boy whizzed forward on the pavement like an arrow :
He ran like a sprinter running a race.

Ramachandra Murty stopped walking and looked back. By then
the boy had gone out of sight.

Ramachandra Murty smiled to himself. Wherever he sees some-
one running, he stands still and looks at him in fascinated wonder. Then
he smiles to himself.

He started walking again.

Several film posters are pasted to the pillars on the pavement -
pictures of beautiful girls, scenes of the heroes and the heroines passion-
ately hugging and rolling over each other.

Still a furlong to go for the bus stop. Unless he starts from home
very early, he can't catch the bus and reach the office in time. Sitamma
wakes up very early, when it is still dark, and starts her chores. Though
she huzzles with the work gasping and sweating, food is not ready before
nine. He eats a few morsels of it in a hurry, but not before it is half-past-
nine. It takes another fifteen minutes for him to reach bus stop..... Then
starts his waiting for the bus. The bus he has to take never comes on time.
Some of them don't stop at all. Because it is a peak hour for the traffic,
all buses are crammed with passengers who squeeze in like bugs and
lizards. His office is not close to his house so that he can gather strength
and walk the distance. It is on the other side of the town, five kilometres
away.

"In that case why don't you rent a house near the office?"
Someof his friends suggest. .

But he can't afford the rents there. They are with the stars. Already he is finding it difficult to make the both ends meet... He has a few happy-go-lucky colleagues at the office. They wear expensive clothes, smoke expensive cigarettes and have an expensive aroma about them. They are always crisp like new currency notes... They can afford to be like that because their "seats" in the office allow them to be so. They are ask-it-will-be-given-to-you sort of seats, *Kamadhenus* and *Kalpavrikshas*.....

His seat is unlike theirs, a very heavy one though. Files pile up on his table and the work is never slack. But he gets nothing besides his mean pay, after several deductions are made. What he gets in the name of pay never makes him happy, but adds to his problems.

He wears a coat, an old one. Some people say that he looks dignified in his coat. Little do they know that his coat conceals the umpteen holes in his shirt.

The heat is baking and boiling. The sun is ill-tempered. The swelter is gradually increasing.

Ramachandra Murty wiped the sweat with his palm, narrowed his eyes into slits and looked along the length of the road. A bus was coming, its number hazy.... By the way the vision is a little dim these days.... May be due to astigmatism.

Yes, it is time one gets it. If the date of birth in his S.S.L.C. Register is right, he is two months past forty eight years. How many years to go for his retirement.....

The number on the bus was not clearly visible until it came very near. It was not his bus. The driver increased the speed as he approached the bus stop. The passengers waiting for it gave it a chase for some distance and came back to their usual places, deciding that it wouldn't stop.

Ramachandra Murty continued to stand there thinking. How long does it take him to reach his office on foot? May be it takes fifty or sixty minutes if he walks fast..... Suppose he runs the distance? Can he run now? Once he could. He could run as fast as the air and an arrow. Audiences applauded and congratulated him. They praised him to the skies for bringing fame to his native district... He was garlanded... photographed...

He used to practise running every day, getting up early in the morning. Miles melted under his slim and shapely legs. They were strong and thin like iron rods. His muscles never felt tired... Can he run now, after becoming tired in life so much? It is doubtful that he can run even a few yards.... "What is the time like?" He asked the man standing by his side.

"Nine-fifty," he said, looking at his watch with a flicker of irritation.

Nine-fifty.... My God...

He must be in his seat by ten. If not his new officer, an irritable fire-brand, will fly into a temper. He is always fretting and fuming without a reason. He is a fairly young man and nobody knows how he has secured so many promotions in his service. Some people say that he has spent a lot of money in managing to secure them. He is a pastmaster in two things. One, amassing money a hundred times more than he has spent. Two, trying to build up an image for himself that he is a stickler for discipline by harassing his subordinates for nothing. It has to be said that he has been successful in both and he knows how to balance them with each other. The very sight of the man is disgusting. He is fat with a beefy neck, so beefy that he can't turn it. When he is expected to turn only his neck, he turns himself. His body fills and even overflows the chair he sits in. He has greying hair and eyes that look like burning pieces of coal. Children are scared by his booming voice.....

That is all right. Now it is past ten. When is the bus coming? How does he get into it? When does he reach the office? And what explanation can he give his boss?

Look, there the bus comes at last! It is crowded and the passengers are crammed into like bricks. Fortunately it stopped because a couple of passengers had to get down at this stop. Ramachandra Murty caught hold of the iron bar on the footboard and got into the bus in a flash before the passengers had an opportunity to get down. If one doesn't have this much of basic experience in the art of bus-boarding, he will have to stand on the pavement for hours, like that man in the suit. Brother.... this world belongs to the one who plunges forward.... If you don't, you are finished.... stand.... stand.... stand, eternally... People around you rush ahead of you.... They alone can go up.... You are left where you are

"Ticket...ticket?"

Ducking under the arms of passengers, the conductor came forward. Ramachandra Murty bought a ticket.

On my next pay day, the first thing I must do is to see an ophthalmologist... My vision is becoming dim.... I find it very difficult to read.... Reading just a few lines makes my eyes water and gives me a headache....

Ramachandra Murty is standing... He had a vision, an old one. He was twenty or twenty-two. By then he had already made a name as a runner... He went to a school in a small town four miles away from his native village. Getting up early and eating the previous day's left-over food, he used to walk to school, his school bag dangling from his shoulder. While returning in the evening he felt more energetic and sprinted his way home. His friends always felt weak and limp after the day's walk. He

always left them far behind... That made him a runner... He always stood first in the races at school. That increased his zest for running. He always went running to every place and almost forgot walking. His legs slimmed and his stamina increased. His light body felt refreshed after a long morning run....

The bus stopped. Pushing two passengers aside and wading through as though in a jungle, Ramachandra Murty got out and found the time from a passer by. His heart missed a beat. He started walking briskly, wiping sweat from his forehead. He has another furlong to walk to reach his office.

The heat is unbearable and frightening like the authority of a dictator .

That day.....

The day of the finals in the inter-district sports meet.... The track was clean and attractive. There were eighteen runners, limbering and relaxing their muscles and getting ready for the race. The District Collector who had been invited to give away the prizes was seated along with other important invitees.

He had practised for hours every day on the same track for that event and was eagerly waiting for it.... The names of the competitors were being announced on the loudspeakers.

The eighteen competitors went to the starting point, bent down and took the starting position. Each one was like an arrow on a drawn bow, ready to plunge forward like a race horse.... Silence for a few moments.....

There was a muffled shot and he lunged forward and had a head start. As he ran he saw only the track ahead of him... no people.... no green grass around.... no blue sky above.... A thin thread broke across his chest... He ran a few yards after that and collapsed exhausted on the grass. People gathered around him... embraced him..... congratulated him. He was gasping for breath but they threw him up into the air and carried him on their shoulders.

When the District Collector was presenting him with the trophy, the stadium reverberated with thunderous sounds of ovation. His photograph was printed in the souvenir, with the write up "The Fastest Runner of the State" underneath it.

Ramachandra Murty is climbing the steps leading to his office, tired and panting. He wiped the sweat on his neck..... That trophy is still with him. He doesn't have glass cases to exhibit the trophy and the several other small cups he won as prizes. Some silver cups found their way to the jewellers' when he was in need. Still he has a couple of them somewhere at home. The big trophy is in the window corner collecting

dust. White ants and silver fish have made holes into his certificates. They have become very old and will break to pieces if touched.

Ramachandra Murty entered the office opening the spring doors and found his boss reading a newspaper. The boss turned in his revolving chair and looked at the clock. He gathered his eyebrows into a knot, put the newspaper down and said, "yes".

Ramachandra Murty tried to reach for the attendance register.

"Wait a little. It will be noon in a short while. You can apply for half-a-day's leave", the officer said.

"Have you got any leave at your credit or have you exhausted it all?" he asked again.

Ramachandra Murty withdrew his hand from the register and said, "I think I have some leave at my credit, sir".

"Good.... that's all right.... when do you start from home?"

"At nine, sir".

"Good.... you start at nine and reach the office at eleven.... so you take two hours to reach the office, don't you?"

"No sir, the trouble is with buses. They don't stop, and they don't allow us to get in".

"Good....that means buses don't suit you".

Ramachandra Murty looked down.

"If you think that buses don't suit you, you should make some alternate arrangement for conveyance. All right... why don't you buy yourself a scooter?"

Ramachandra Murty tried to smile.

"Where do I get the money from for a scooter?"

"Good... you don't have money. So a car or a scooter is out of the question. Then why don't you start from home a little more early... say at eight?"

"By then food won't be ready, sir".

"Oh, we have to think about food also. So you can't start earlier than you do now. All right.... write the leave letter. Meanwhile I will think about a solution"

Ramachandra Murty took a sheet of paper and started writing a leave letter for the forenoon. The officer was looking at him with a malicious twinkle in his eyes.

After Ramachandra Murty finished it, the officer took it from him and put it aside.

"Yes, here is an idea. I think it is the best one," he said.

"What is it, sir? "

"Yes, really it is the best....you can start at home at nine as you do now. But you can reach the office on time. It is good for your health also....good physical exercise..."

"May I know it, sir?"

"Get out of your house at the stroke of nine. Start running... Run fast... Don't stop anywhere... you can be here in half an hour... How do you like it?"

The officer started laughing. He was twisted with laughter. He laughed and laughed and rested himself on the table, exhausted. His face became flushed with laughter and his eyes started watering....

Ramachandra Murty's face became red with anger. His fingers trembled and his whole body shook in a fit of fury. He started speaking in a voice choked with emotion. "Your behaviour is not decent, sir. In fact it is vulgar. It doesn't agree with the dignity of your post. I am older and more experienced than you. You shouldn't talk to me like that. Your education has failed to teach you that you ought not to talk to me like that... I am sorry for you.... really sorry... I consider it a misfortune at this age to have met you and worked under you. If you think it is a sense of humour, you are thoroughly mistaken. Your so-called sense of humour will take revenge on you some time".

Ramachandra Murty turned round and started walking towards the door. But he stopped impulsively and faced the officer.

"Perhaps you are not aware that I was a famous runner once. If you want to learn something about me, ask someone who has some knowledge of sports... good bye..." He opened the spring doors and walked out.

That evening he came out of the office and rubbed his palm on his forehead.

The atmosphere has cooled down. A cool breeze is blowing. Without waiting for the bus, he started walking briskly.

He saw some young men practising running in a playfield on his way. He stopped there for a few minutes.

He started walking again.... Now he is walking through deserted streets. Suddenly he had an impulse to run. He rolled up the bottoms of his pants and the sleeves of his coat.

"Run....Run," he said to himself.

He stopped only when others stood in his way and at road junctions. He was running when he reached the street he lived in.

Gasping for breath he entered his house and collapsed on the cot.

"Why.....why do you look so tired," Sitamma enquired with anxiety.

"Nothing....some water....no no.....some coffee," he said struggling for breath.

After five minutes she came back and was horrified. She could not understand why her husband was in that condition. She hurried out and brought a doctor who lived in the neighbourhood. He examined Ramachandra Murty and said, "No reason for panic....It is mild paralytic attack....The right side is paralysed....Let him take rest....I will come again and see him....Absolutely no danger to life....He will be able to move his leg and hand before long," and went away.

Tears welled up in his eyes and started rolling down his cheeks. He had only one vision....the vision of that great day....the big trophy...and the sounds in his heart.

"Run....run....Ramu....run...."

"The Fastest Runner of the State"

"Run....run....run....my dear boy....run."

DARKNESS

KRISHNA BOSE

Irrevocably alert the surface stands
with indigos burnt hard
and thickness impinges in stone-faced lumps

Can this tar-fed carpet insulate
the fortress which houses mucky pythons ?

Will the dark-eyed nuances tamper
the whisper of the sun-bathed minarets ?

Shall ever the unmapped denseness
Spill over the gay-decked violets ?

Will the puffs of nerve-wracked air
ever spare the eloquence of the sphere ?

Echoes careen on the flow.

Yet nowhere, a mustard-keen viewer
tries solemnly to abduct
the opaque lapses of the stars.

A LINGUISTIC FACTOR IN TAMIL CHARACTEROLOGY

PURASU BALAKRISHNAN

The eminent psychologist Ernest Jones, in his essay *A Linguistic Factor in English Characterology* * has pointed out that (in his words) the development of the outstanding English character trait of propriety, commented on by practically all foreign observers, has been fostered by the peculiar nature of the English language. Much, indeed all, of what he says in the elucidation of his thesis, is applicable to the Tamil language.

Ernest Jones remarks, "The difference in being invited to a dish of veal and pork and one of calves' flesh and swine flesh is very perceptible." This was brought out long ago by Sir Walter Scott with a mixture of satire and humour in his novel *Ivanhoe*, the action of which is placed in the reign of King Richard I, when the two main races of England - the Anglo-Saxons and the Normans - were still hostile to each other and not united by a common language. In the opening scene of the novel the conversation between two swineherds runs as follows:

"Truly," said Wamba, "... leave the herd to their destiny which, whether they meet with bands of travelling soldiers or of outlaws or of wandering pilgrims, can be little else than to be converted into Normans before morning, to thy no small ease and comfort."

"The swines turned to Normans to my confort !" quoth Gurth.
"Expound that to me, Wamba, for my brain is too dull and my mind too vexed to read riddles."

"Why, how call you those grunting brutes running about on their four legs ?" demanded Wamba.

* From 'Essays in Applied Psychoanalysis, Volume I, Miscellaneous Essays' by Ernest Jones. Pub. The Hogarth Press Ltd., London.

"Swine, fool, swine," said the herd. "Every fool knows that."

"And swine is good Saxon," said the jester. "But how call you the sow when she is flayed and drawn and quartered and hung up by the heels like a traitor?"

"Pork," answered the swine-herd.

"I am very glad every fool knows that too," said Wamba, "and pork, I think, is good Norman French. And so, when the brute lives and is in charge of a Saxon slave, she goes by her Saxon name, but becomes a Norman and is called pork, when she is carried to the castle-hall to feast among the nobles. What does thou think of this, friend Gurth, ha?"

Words are symbols and are understood by a process of learning through association of spontaneous visualization or other means of sensory realization with the objects or qualities for which they stand. During this process they are charged with psychic energy in the sense that they are directly related to the learner's emotional and intellectual experiences, and can readily evoke such response in him on recall, conscious or subconscious. What applies to the individual naturally applies also, extended and collectively, to the people who are a composite of individuals. This investment of feelings with psychic energy Freud called "libidinization". Sir James Frazer has brought out that to the primitive man the symbol is often more real than to the civilized man. The savage practises magic not only through a man's hair, nail or parts of the body, but also through his name. Words, thus born primarily evocatively, later tend to become, in varying degrees, shorn of their original charge, until they culminate finally in the last achievement of the human mind, namely abstract thought.

The more close or immediate the association of words with reality, the more do they come home to the people bosom's in the nakedness of reality and with the force of reality. This nakedness and force may be attenuated by holding the words, and thus their ideadition, at a distance, so to say, from the speaker or listener by clothing them in an unfamiliar garb, that is, a foreign language.

Ernest Jones says:

If it is unusually easy to give vocal expression to forbidden ideas in a way that inhibits the development of feeling, it seems to me to follow that in such circumstances the feeling will be more readily and extensively inhibited. Now it is clear that this is just the situation in which the English race has been placed for nearly a thousand years. The Saxon and Norman languages, after living side by side for about two centuries, gradually coalesced to form English, but to this day there is in most cases an obvious difference in the "feel" of the words belonging to

each, and still more between the words of Saxon origin and Latin words more recently introduced than their Norman-French precursors. All literary men recognize the distinction clearly, and students are urged to choose Saxon words wherever possible because of their capacity to arouse plastic images and feeling-tone. Our store of synonyms is unequalled by that of any other European language*; and the difference in the respects I have mentioned between such pairs as house and domicile, fatherly and paternal, book and volume are quite patent. The difference in being invited to a dish to veal or pork and one of calves' flesh and swine flesh is very perceptible. No other nation is unable to use its native word for belly if need be, but we have to say "abdomen" and that only with circumscription. In English the lady is gravid, pregnant or enceinte, there being no single native word to describe the phenomenon. The process in question can often be followed in stages, such as when the Saxon word "gut" gets replaced first by the Norman-French "bowel", and then, when this is found too coarse, by the Latin "intestine".

The working of this phenomenon in literary men is exemplified in the case of Johnson, of whom Professor Henry Gifford has observed that he wrote Latin poems all through his life, sometimes to express feelings which would have looked raw and naked in English, and that by setting personal anxieties and fears in the frame of classical reference, he could acknowledge and control them.

The situation in Tamil is analogous to that in English. In the place of the Norman language, and subsequently Latin, coalescing with the native Saxon we have, in similar chronological order, Sanskrit and English coalescing with Tamil to produce a richness and flexibility of its vocabulary which, one may presume from the fact of this mixing, is probably unequalled by any other Indian language. For almost every word we have synonyms derived from Tamil and Sanskrit. They possess different feeling-tones: those from Tamil being simple, racy and saucy, short and often monosyllabic or repetitive, crisp and vigorous, evocative and intimate; those from Sanskrit being often long, rolling and ornate, at one remove from the self, reverberating with the power of incantation; each of the pair with its own associations, nuances and ranges of feeling.

The influence on the people of the words from two different languages has been similar to that of the bilingually derived English words on the English people. In daily speech we find the Tamils often using Sanskrit or English words in expressions of intimacy, raw

* Cf. G.H. Vallins: "Our vocabulary, gathered from so many sources, is unusually rich." (G.H. Vallins's *The Best English*, p. 26, Pub. Pan Books Ltd., London, 1960.

feelings and physiological functions. Probably no other people use a foreign word for "love" as frequently as we find the Tamil people of today using the English word for it, or less commonly the Sanskrit word, instead of the pure Tamil. They even fight shy of using their own words, and prefer using English words for husband, wife and mistress. "Aambadayaal" (a colloquialism for "ahamudaiyaal") in Tamil for "wife" sounds too intimate or coarse sometimes, "bharyai" (the Sanskrit word "bharya" Tamilised) too pedantic, "manaivi" in good Tamil stilted. The words "wife" or "Mrs." in English often come natural to the Tamilian, or less often, the word "samsaaram" derived from Sanskrit. This habit of holding feelings at one remove extends to expressions of physiological functions of excretion and reproduction. The Tamil word for "faeces" is unthinkable, and people use the word "malam", derived from Sanskrit, or "stools" in English. In general, for whatever offends "good breeding" or decorum the Tamilian uses Sanskrit or English words instead of the Tamil.

As Ernest Jones has truly remarked, the English character has been characterized by foreign observers as marked by a sense of propriety. Propriety is a minor form of inhibition. In the Tamils the inhibition has become even more extreme, often of gripping severity. While this leads to frustration in the individual, this has not been without advantage to the Tamil people. Civilization is based ultimately on inhibition. Easy access to inhibitory factors and their insidious operation through their language may have been conducive to the promotion of cerebration in the Tamil people and to the qualities of precision and crispness in Tamil speech, humour and literature.

REMEMBERING HER BIRTHDAY

UMANATH BHATTACHARYA

On what day of the week, month and year
On what date of the calendar she bloomed
Like a sweet little graceful flower
I know, and cherish that day.

Long ago a flower unfolded in
A tub in my outer veranda. A few
Insects somehow entered within to eat
Into its vitals. Foolish creatures. They thought
That tender flower did bloom for them.
A swarm of humming honeybees and colourful
Butterflies wished to plunge in its breasts.
The flower-girl thwarted them directly.

At the day-end what the flirting winds
Were whispering to her to warm up the fair one
I wondered. Sudd'nly my mind was filled
With a bitter, jealous gall. Like
Those insects, bees and butterflies did I take
It for granted that flower was mine, mine alone
And not for anybody else. Ah, the fond
Feeling of love. In this area where's
The difference, twin the bees, butterflies and the huma

(Translated from Bengali by the poet)

R. K. NARAYAN THE WORLD OF MALGUDI

DR. T. VASUDEVA REDDY

A novelist to be successful tries to limit his fictional activity to the narrow boundaries of a region or a limited circumference of his chosen place which, as a matter of fact, becomes his fictional world. A novel is generally expected to be the presentation not only of men, their manners, mental activities and social matters inclusive of customs and traditions but also of the geographical features of the place where these people live as their lives and behavioural patterns are largely conditioned by the physical features of the place where they live. As such often the success of a novel depends on the successful selectivity of a particular locale for the fictional activity. As a result the distinctive spirit generated by the place pervades the pages, characterizes the people that inhabit the place and ultimately symbolizes the place and its people. The greatness of the novel lies in the fact that the place, limited as it is, transcends its limits and gets identified with the universal ; in other words, the microcosm becomes the macrocosm.

R.K.Narayan is such a novelist whose novels, though they primarily centre round a narrowly demarcated place such as Malgudi, rise above the regional framework and become novels of greater significance and broader vision. That is why, on the face of it, Narayan appears to be a regional novelist whose plots have a fictional locale, namely a small township of Malgudi in South India. Just as Hardy's novels are called Wessex novels, in the same way Narayan's novels are called Malgudi novels.

In this way Narayan's Malgudi has the analogical relationship with Hardy's Wessex. As Prof. K.R.Sinivasa Iyengar remarks, "Malagudi is Narayan's Casterbridge". Scholars have made vain attempts and wild surmises in identifying this small town of Malgudi. Prof. Iyengar himself thinks that it could be the Malgudi on the bank of the river Kaveri near Yadavagin in Mysore. Some others tried to identify Malgudi with Coimbatore which shares many common features such as a river on one side, forests and hills on the other, a mission school and a college, extension to the municipal limits, mills, etc. But all these speculations remain only imaginary and Narayan's Malgudi seems to be a product of his own mind, a world of his imagination.

He has not drawn any map of this place as William Faulkner did, nor had he a clear-cut map in his mind as Hardy had of his Wessex, though others have done the work for Narayan as, for instance, M.K.Naik has appended a map of Malgudi in his book *The Ironic Vision*. As time progresses, Narayan's Malgudi also has grown. The distinctiveness of the fictional setting is quite obviously felt in his creation of the imaginary town Malgudi and it is against this background that his characters engage themselves with stresses and strains of life. This inter-relatedness of the place and its people is able to convey an intimate sense of the place, as "a novel is essentially bound up in the local, the real, the present and the day-to-day experience of life".

Malgudi, purely an imaginary place that stands for a small South Indian town, becomes the setting for all his novels. In other words the fictional world of Narayan became the world of Malgudi and as such the world of Narayan is essentially the world of Malgudi. When he was asked how the idea of the place and its name struck his mind, he is reported to have replied that it was in September, 1930, that name Malgudi struck his mind as he woke up on the day of Vijayadasami.

It seems once when his uncle asked him why he wrote about some vague place, not found anywhere while there are millions of real places he can write about, Narayan answers why he chose a fictional place like Malgudi. He explains, "An imaginary town like that has great possibilities. You can make anything out of it, whereas if you set your town in a real place you are bound by geography and its existing structure. But in a place like Malgudi, though the heart of the city may be fixed it can expand".

The above explanation of R.K.Narayan is the most satisfactory one that supplies the sound reason for his decision of choosing one imaginary place of Malgudi as the centre of the actions of his characters. While Hardy in his novels invests the place, whether Egdon Heath or Casterbridge, with symbolic significance, Narayan does not create any such symbolic atmosphere. But in his novels the place becomes a living reality lending credibility to the deeds of the people. In a sense Malgudi is "Narayan's Casterbridge". By presenting the socio-cultural milieu and by showing the inter-relatedness as well as interdependence of the place and its people, Narayan gives equal importance to the locale as to the personae. The minute drawing of the topographical details of Malgudi and its vicinity makes the place breathe with life. Though Malgudi is his own creation, he succeeds in capturing "the spirit of the place" and makes it permanent.

It is rather disturbing to note when R.K.Narayan is called a regional novelist. Since all his novels are set in the surroundings of Malgudi, P.P. Mehta says, "The regional novel finds its full expression in R.K. Narayan". While A.V. Krishna Rao calls Narayan "a regional novelist", Prof. William Walsh remarks that "Narayan's Malgudi novels are regional but not parochial". It is true that the action in his novels centres round Malgudi;

convenience, metaphorically it grows far beyond the chartered dimensions where the limits fade leading to the new vistas of a wide world.

To say that he is a regional novelist is to misrepresent his creative activity, mistake the significance of his work and to misread his fiction. In spite of the provincialism and localization of the life of the narrow world of Malgudi, the characters outgrow their limited regional boundaries and their actions get generalized. That is why Meenakshi Mukherjee rightly says, "R.K.Narayan successfully achieves a universal vision" through his non-metropolitan situations.

Malgudi is created as a self-contained town with a centrally located market, a taluk office, a court, a police station, a jail, an officer's club and other clubs, two schools - Albert Mission School and Board High School - a town hall, a library, hotels, hospitals, banks, cinema theatres, weaving mills, a railway station, taxis, autos and so on. There are many streets and lanes and roads; while the Market Road is in the heart of the town, the Forest Road leads to the Mempi Forest. The ringing of the gong at the taluk office is heard in *Swami and Friends* and *The vendor of Sweets*. It is a town with a Municipal Chairman and a judicial court.

In the *Waiting for Mahatma*, when the Municipal Chairman organizes the reception and meeting of Gandhi, the District Magistrate attends the meeting. In *Swami and Friends*, Narayan makes a mention of lawyers and the closures of courts in the midsummer heat of May. In the novel *The Dark Room* a character Tanamma, the wife of the Public Prosecutor, visits Savitri the adjournment lawyer who is skillful in getting a case prolonged.

In another novel *Mr. Sampath*, the District Judge inaugurates the film "The Burning of Kama" under the banner of the Sun Rise Pictures. It has got a Public Library and Reading-Room where Madhu, the talkative man, often meets Rann, the self-styled Futurologist in *The Talkative Man*. Albert Mission College is mentioned in *The English Teacher* where Mr. Krishna works as a lecturer. Many printing presses are there; one of them is run by Nataraja in *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*, while the other by Sampath in *Mr. Sampath*. A new press is seen in *The Talkative Man*. In the *Waiting for the Mahatma* Sriram is kept in the jail at Malgudi itself.

There are many banks and industries. There is Engladia Banking Corporation in *Mr. Sampath* with Edward Shilling, a tough man, as its manager. There is a branch of Engladia Insurance Co., for which Ramani is the local manager in *The Dark Room*. The Central Cooperative Land Mortgage Bank is introduced in the *Financial Expert*, while in *The Waiting for the Mahatma* we come across a Fund Office from where Sriram's grandmother gets regular payment. Mills in and around Malgudi reveal the industrial growth of the town. While *Swami and Friends* introduces mill managers Mr Hentel and Pelty, *The Bachelor of Arts* presents two weaving mills and a Mill Road.

The focus of awakening interest in Malgudi is its railway station situated at the southern end of the town. Without this railway station, there cannot be any action in *The Guide* where Raju, popularly called Railway Raju, acts as the tourist guide for all the visitors who alight there. Only in the capacity of a guide he is introduced to Macro and Rosie and this acquaintance ultimately decides the destinies of all the three. It is at the railway station that the Talkative Man chances to meet the robust lady commandant Sarasa (the wife of Rann) whose imposing as well as pragmatic nature brings out the true nature of the station master and the porter. The growth of Malgudi and the growing popularity of the Mempi Hills lead to the simultaneous growth of the railway station.

Motor-cars, taxis and taxi-drivers can also be found here. In *Swami and Friends*, Swami goes to the club in the car of his father's friend. In *The Dark Room*, Ramani has a car; in *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*, Vasu owns a jeep. Gaffur the taxi-driver is a popular person who figures in *The Guide*, *The Vendor of Sweets* and *The Talkative Man*. *The Talkative Man* being a recent novel shows the growing use of cars and auto-rickshaws, and in this novel Dr. Rann is seen always engaging a taxi whenever he wishes to go with Girija, the labrarian's granddaughter.

In the world of Malgudi there is no dearth of hotels, clubs, studios, theatres, etc. We come across numerous hotels such as The Taj, Anand Bhavan, the Modern Lodge, etc. Macro stays with his wife Rodie till he parts with her in Anand Bhavan. There are clubs and cinema theatres for people who want to have some diversion. Swami's father is a member of a club, so is Brown the Principal (in the *Bachelor of Arts*) and they play tennis there. Ramani (of *The Dark Room*) is also a member of a club and he goes to the Palace Talkies along with his wife Savitri. The fact that English films also are screened can be inferred from the *Bachelor of Arts* where Chandran goes to a night show in the company of his friend Ramu. Many photo studios such as Star Studio have come up.

Thus the whole township of Malgudi, purely a land of imagination, appears vibrant with life and in fact it becomes a living presence in all his novels, from the earliest novel *Swami and Friends* to the recent novel *Talkative Man*. Each novel enlarges the boundaries of the place and opens new vistas of life with gradual modernization and industrialization. Rural folk of simple living, with traditional set-up, gradually undergo a change with the impact of Western influence and the technological advancement. Anderson Lane, Lawley Extension remain as relics of its pre-independent glory, while the re-naming of roads, parks and colonies after national leaders such as Gandhi and Nehru marks the significant change that comes after independence. There is gradual development in the transport facilities. Mempi Bus Transport Corporation comes into existence on account of which journey to Mempi Hills becomes very easy.

Malgudi never loses its pristine glory in the midst of this enormous growth. The river Sarayu, with its legendary origin from the arrow of Sri Rama, flows to the north of the town and it is only ten minutes walk from Ellaman Street. (At a short distance from the river) A short walk after crossing the river where it is considerably shallow leads to the enchanting greenery of Nallappa's mango groves where Mr. Sampath with the help of Hollywood director starts the initial shooting of his film under the banner of the Sun Rise Pictures. The same road leads to Mempi Forest and thence to Mempi Hills which supply all the timber and wood needed for the construction of houses.

In the world of Malgudi, one can witness the conflict between traditional and modernity which is best illustrated in his novel *The Bachelor of Arts* which shows that while Malgudi begins to reveal the signs of awakening to the Western ideas and modern civilization it lingers long in accepting it and tries to cherish its own traditional values and practices. The tradition-bound world of Malgudi is not a fertile ground for the fulfilment of love-marriages; obviously it becomes a futile attempt for Chandran to marry Malathi, the girl of his choice. Tradition believes in arranged marriages, and love marriages are a matter of horror to the people of older generation.

Chandran appears to be a bit of a modernist in the company of his friends who often go to night shows and use cigarettes. But his mother is religious, austere and orthodox in her conduct. While her fingers turn the beads, her lips utter the holy name of Sri Rama, part of her mind is filled with the thoughts of her domestic sphere as her eyes look at the beauty of coconut trees. Chandran's argument fails to convince her, because until she is alive she would insist on respecting the old custom. As a result Chandran does not succeed in marrying Malathi and in a mood of disappointment he becomes a Sanyasi. In the end he realizes that his renunciation is not at acceptance of ascetic values but a mere rejection of tradition; he wakes up to the reality and tries to make peace with the society by yielding to a conventional marriage, thus resulting in the affirmation of traditional values.

The economic development of Malgudi gradually leads to the ignoring of traditional customs and acceptance of modern outlook. The change to modernity can be first witnessed in *The Dark Room*, where Malgudi, as early as in 1935, suddenly comes into line with the modern age by building a well-equipped theatre, Palace Talkies. Ramani hints at the progress the town has achieved. As the Branch Manager of the Engladia Insurance Company, he feels proud of getting the lakhs of business. A similar change is discernible in the attitude of the women. They feel happy to see themselves liberated from the chains of tradition and get economic freedom for which the supportive evidence can be got from Shanta Bai who says, "I love unconventional things. Otherwise I should not be here, but nursing children and cooking for a husband".

Savitri wants her daughters to become graduates so that they can have economic independence and they need not depend on mar-

account of the conflict between the old and the new values. She tries to bid goodbye to her domestic sphere. Her going away from her husband results only in her coming back to him in the end. Mr. Sampath gives an elaborate picture of the fast-changing situation of Malgudi. "Overnight as it were Malgudi passed from a semi-agricultural town to semi-industrial town, with a sudden flux of population of all sorts." The Municipal Chairman frequently speaks of a grand "Malgudi Extension Scheme". And hopes of developing it into a garden city. The District Board President has been invited to the programme of opening a bridge across the Sarayu, five miles from the heart of Malgudi. *The Vendor of Sweets* reveals that plans for a hydro-electric project were afoot somewhere on the Mempi Hills.

In spite of this amazing development in the fabric of life of Malgudi, the basic texture of the life of the middle-class people remains by and large unaffected. In *Mr. Sampath* Srinivas's wife remains the same old traditional Hindu housewife and doesn't want to go alone in the town. Ravi's mother cannot shake herself off the superstitious ideas and continues to think that her son is possessed by some evil spirit. Her native ignorance reaches the climax where she brings a magician to perform some occult exercise to drive away the evil spirit.

The English Teacher when Susila, Krishnan's wife, falls ill, his mother feels that it is caused by the influence of the evil eye and calls for a Swamiji who utters some Mantras, takes a pinch of sacred ash, rubs it on her forehead and ties a talisman to her arm. The society is not free from inhibitions with regard to girls that belong to the traditional families having dancing as their profession.

A close observation of the vivid spectrum of the life of Malgudi presents the life of the Indians in general and reflects the life of a larger world, the Indian sub-continent. The little world of Malgudi with its socio-political changes and economic as well as industrial development stands for the wider world of India and the fast-changing nature of her character in all the walks of life ever since she became independent. The East-West confrontation or the conflict between tradition and modernity, presented intensely in the later novels such as *Mr. Sampath*, *Waiting for the Mahatma*, is not only a feature of Malgudi but it is a strong aspect of the life of the growing and rising country such as India.

The greatness of R.K. Narayan lies in making the life of Malgudi a realistic experience and enlarging the limited sphere of Malgudi to global limits. Thus one can find the tradition-oriented Indian world, symbolically presented in the miniature world of Malgudi, trying to achieve multifarious progress in all the fields of life and thereby awakening to modernity.

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SPINNERS OF "WHO DUNNIT" YARNS AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

G. GIRIJA BAI

Ever since Edgar Allan Poe invented the detective genre with his tales of ratiocination, in the first half of nineteenth century, crime story or detective story, as it is variously called, has had no turning back. Not only in America and England, not only in English language, every language of the world which can boast of a literary tradition has been attracting writers to this genre of fiction. Here at last is a kind of story which finds popularity with readers of every kind. The highbrow and the low-brow, old and young, students and scholars, elite and working class alike turn to this story with avid interest. A crime story? The antennae are up instantly.

It is not within the scope of this paper to deliberate upon the reasons behind the magical influence of detective story or the "Who-dunnit". The aim here is only to present a brief review as perceived by an Indian reader. Fiction involving space crimes, scientific crimes and espionage is excluded.

Crime story today largely has an ephemeral existence. More often it is merely 'pulp' stuff.

Poe's own stories did not suffer this fate. Even today his stories are read with fascination and his name is taken with reverence. In his ratiocinative stories Poe had used certain devices of crime detection which have become almost a tradition. He brought in science to the aid of crime detection and introduced the use of microscope and ballistic tests. Making a hero of the detective and making the policemen inferior to the detective in powers of ratiocination etd., are all traditions handed down by this master writer.

The credit for giving the sleuth story lovers their first detective hero who would become the greatest celebrity and would even transcend the bounds of his fictional character, goes to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who was writing in the latter half of nineteenth century. Doyle perceived crime detection as a scientific process; accordingly he made his hero Sherlock Holmes proficient in science - in chemistry - which was thought to be the real science in that day. Holmes and his devoted assistant Dr. Watson are the most endearing pair in the world of fiction detectives

perhaps. In his own day, so powerful was Holmes' magnetism that Doyle's investigative dramas were felt to speak more loudly than Huxley's arguments and analogies.

As a matter of convention (also coming down from Poe), crime mystery writers give life to a detective hero of their own imagination, invest him with superlative powers such as they perceive as necessary and indispensable in a successful sleuth. This superman hero features in every crime story coming out of his creator's pen and thrills the readers with his marvellous performance. He may be a police detective or a private detective, depending upon the author's choice.

Sherlock Holmes, however, had none of the superlative skills of the heroes of later ilk. His dynamism was cerebral and his superlative powers were his scientific method: keen observation, testing of the empirical data (evidence) and deduction of the result. So powerful was the appeal and influence of Holmes, scientific method that some scientific thinkers went so far as to say, "Sherlock Holmes pointed the way for many of the ideas and techniques that were later to be discovered as they attempted to contribute information from their various disciplines to the solution of crimes".³

Even some philosophers and semioticians made tongue-in-cheek comments hailing Holmes as the "prophet of scientific method and calling his "deduction" nothing but C.S. Peirce's "abduction".⁴ Mockery apart, the first direct effect of Holmes' method took shape as the first crime laboratory in Lyons.⁵ All this has been stated only to underline the breadth of controversy and interest Doyle's stories had generated in his own time and in subsequent years.

The second name to reckon with among the sleuth story writers is that of Agatha Christie. Christie, who started at the beginning of this century and wrote well into the middle of it, was a prodigious writer by any standard. Her detective works alone number 184, and she dabbled in other genres too."⁶

Christie's sleuths have none of the scientific touch of Holmes. Marple arrives at the solution by closely studying the behaviour of the criminal, constructing it from the available clues and information derived from persistent querying of the individuals, connected eye witnesses, etc. Poirot gets his answers by intuitive reasoning.

Both Doyle's and Christie's sleuths are learned in their own ways and their erudition is made known by allusions to monographs and works of authority. Their prose is neat and chaste, disciplined. Just as Doyle had popularised scientific method of investigation, Christie may be said to have popularised that psychological method of sleuthing. Besides making use of folk ritual and witchcraft in her stories, Christie scored one over the feminists. Long before de Beauvoir and her school of feminism caught up Christie chose a vocation - sleuth story writing - which was thought to be no job for a

Marple unhesitatingly had her female qualities and became bluntly professional during the course of her investigations.

Doyle and Christie are the two milestones of sleuth story. As nineteenth century tapered out the stream rushed into wider fields: a multitude of writers, defying any attempt at enumeration, took to sleuth fiction writing. Most of them followed the convention set by the founder master and created a detective hero, then generated a series of whodunnit puzzles, which the hero solved with admirable dexterity and cleverness. This is not to say that Doyle had the field all alone to himself. But none of his contemporaries could blaze a trail as brilliant as his.

Anna Katherine Green, who is considered the mother of detective story, was writing in America almost a decade before Conan Doyle. She introduced a male sleuth Ebenezer Gryce and female sleuth Violet Strange. Austin Freeman in England and Arthur Reeve in America were manufacturing crime mysteries which their respective heroes Dr. Therndike and Craig Kennedy successfully uncovered. Both these sleuths had taken over the scientific method from their predecessor Holmes. These are only a few to mention, the more popular ones. The advance of twentieth century had seen ever-increasing number of writers as well as readers being attracted to this genre of fiction.

By the middle of this century detective story had undergone a sea change and in the latter half it suffered further vast changes. The personality of detective heroes, the nature of crimes, the types of criminals had all metamorphosed qualitatively. Consistent with this trend, the quality of their prose too had gone through a cycle of changes. The chaste and neat prose of earlier writers grew terse, lurid and pacey by the mid-century, which, towards the present decade, acquired a fast, action-oriented pedestrian quality with a scattering of the tinsel (hackneyed, lurid). Likewise, the detectives who were mainly cerebral and scientific in the beginning, became dashing and debonair, shrewd and chivalrous stunt heroes by the mid-century, further changed to fast acting, shrewd, criminal-hunters and stuntmen *par excellence*, towards the approach of current decade.

The criminals too who started out as members of respectable sections of society, less and less belonged there. From doctors and artists and jealous husbands and suspicious wives they slowly became secretaries, club crooners, cello players, barmaids, chefs and chaffers and, in recent years they have been coming more and more from the fringe society: gangsters, hired goons, card sharps, street muggers and bootleggers, book-keepers, racketeers, cheap sluts, pimps... . Though crime by its very nature is an act of violence, in recent times their perpetration has acquired a more pugnacious and disgusting quality. Unclean and uncouth, sporting weird costumes and hairdos, perhaps lavishly tatted, these members of fringe society commit crimes more out of spite, perversity and boredom than for any other valid reason.

valid reason. Naturally to corner such criminals the sleuths have to be tough guys and he-men, their wits and skills a hair-breadth sharper than those of their targets, always outguessing them by a split second and keeping alive. The locale too shifted from posh houses and plush bungalows to backway alleys, bar-rooms, hovels, cheap jack motels, eerie joints and call houses.

Going through these changes gradually from Poe to the present times, no wonder the detective story got settled in the pulp class.

Peter Cheyney, Mickey Spillane, Brett Halliday who were writing around the mid-century in Britain and America, created slick playboyish heroes while Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett, Chester Himes created tough guy Rambo-ish heroes. Among other well remembered writers are P.D. James, Ngaio Marsh, Cyril Hare, Dorothy Sayers, Amanda Cross, Cornell Woolrich, Valerie Miner, and Kinky Friedman and Sharyn McCrumb to mention two recent names.

Among these Hare is considered as the master of classic detective story. Himes deals with fringe society of Harlem.

Sayers uses crime more as a platform to argue out other issues, and keeps violence to the minimum. Cross and James also use violence sparingly. James makes elaborate use of myth and symbol. Marsh resorts to witchcraft and folk ritual, like Christie. She also probes psychological eccentricities. McCrumb, who says that crime is primarily motivated by a perceived threat to cultural identity, uses crime as catalyst for studying middle class society.⁷ Miner, like Sayers, uses crime as a platform, to make a thematic point. Her stories too contain little actual violence.⁸

As far as Indian mystery-story lovers are concerned, apart from Doyle and Christie, whose popularity is universal, other writers who have been widely favoured include Edgar Wallace, Peter Cheyney, Mickey Spillane, Dorothy Sayers, Brett Halliday, P.D. James and John D. MacDonald.

It would be unfair to wind up this paper without mentioning two of the popular sleuth writers, popular particularly with reference to Indian readers. First of them is Erle Stanley Gardner, who wrote well into the 'Seventies. The name rings a familiar bell. Instantly flashes on the mind's screen the image of Perry Mason, the Californian criminal attorney tall, neat, hard grey eyes, holding a dry martini in his hand; his electrifying court-room histrionics. Besides launching Mason on his road to phenomenal success. Gardner tried his hand at detectives of conventional mould. The slick playboy-cum-toughies. And he went in for pairs: first there was the team of Bertha Cool and Donald Lam and then the husband-wife team of Duryeas, and Ken Corning, a forerunner of Mason. But these were mere drops in the ocean, no islands of light, which is what

Mason turned out to be. Ever since this tall, smart, daredevil attorney with his unorthodox ways, aided by his pretty and efficient secretary Della Street and detective pal Paul Drake of Drake Detective Agency next door, started terrorizing the criminal prosecution lawyers of California, ripping their carefully-built cases of shreds by his cutting cross examination, thundering arguments and dramatic courtroom revelations, Gardner needed no more to worry except to spin a new mystery yarn in order to make a new ground for Mason's histrionics. Gardner made Mason (82 cases) and Mason made Gardner: he more than paid back the debt to his creator. While he lasted, Mason dazzled like a diamond. From the detectives of his time Mason primarily differed by his profession. His conduct and manners he kept always impersonal impeccably professional and his luggage business-like and efficient. No pedestrian slang for him. Nor was he a playboy like his contemporaries. He was a dead serious professional. After Holmes, perhaps Mason is the one hero sleuth fiction celebrated as gloriously, though on a lower plane. But then, perhaps, Mason never aspired to parallel Holmes.

The second name that needs mention is that of James Hadley Chase, who is a writer of recent times. Unlike others of his ilk, he did not create a steady hero for his stories. There are of course a few series, only of two or three stories each: of insurance investigator Mallory and a millionaire playboy Don Micklem, for instance. Largely he wrote without a steady hero. Usually his protagonists find themselves in spooky situations, get nosy and start digging. Sometimes a tardy local official may be probing the case. This casual approach cuts his canvas and hero down to life size, which lends a candid charm to his stories.

Yet, in spite of the breadth and dimension it has acquired over a period of a century and a half, it is rather disappointing to note that this genre has been left out of the historical studies of literature. Some of the sleuth stories undeniably make better fiction compared with some secular works of fiction. Yet historians and historiographers of literature stoically refuse to give this genre a place in their chronicles. Admittedly sleuth fiction is popularistic; but so does a substantial chunk of secular prose fall below the literary meridian. A small part-however small it may be-of detective fiction does transcend the pulp meridian perhaps. Is it then fair to categorically ignore a genre as such, especially one which ways a large section of reading populace from all planes of society and all walks of life? It is not within the scope of this paper to stretch this point beyond this limit.

To cast a glance back and sum up, the sleuth story genre which started as a thin trickle with Poe, swelled into a rushing river by the turn of the nineteenth century and grew into a mighty ocean speckled with numerous luminous islets. But the beacon of light emanating from Conan Doyle and his Sherlock Holmes collection into the far future mingling

with the dull glow refulging the blurred line of horizon. And we hear a charismatic voice explaining, "elementary, my dear Watson!"

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PARTING

Dr. S. RENGACHARI

With you in the upper berth,
and me in the lower berth,
our train has reached the terminus,
the point where we have to get down
and to part in grace and peace
as agreed before ;
betrayal neither on your part
nor on my part
we have shared our secrets
deep in the chasm of love.
No pangs of remorse or regret,
no need to look back.
Let us carry with us
our mysteries and memories
as we take different roads,
and let our bonds melt
in the eyeless mist of silence.

“KANYASULKAM”

S.M.Y. S A S T R Y

{ **Kanyasulkam** is the first and the greatest original drama clothed in spoken Telugu dialect by Gurazada Venkata Appa Rao (1862-1915). It may not be widely known due to language, cultural and other constraints. But it should be reckoned as one of the great plays of the world. When it was first published it was hailed as an event in the history of Telugu literature. Every character in the play is a type and at the same time individual. The drama is a landmark of perfect characterisation. The social problems which were in vogue when the play was written are obsolete today. But the drama *Kanyasulkam* lives. The century of the play is being celebrated this year in Andhra Pradesh.

Editor}

Kanya sulkam is the first original drama to be written in the Telugu spoken dialect. It is also the first Telugu drama with a social theme, and it is by far the best drama in Telugu literature so far.

The author, Mr. G.V. Appa Rao, “wrote it to advance the cause of social reform and to combat a popular prejudice that the Telugu language was unsuited to the stage. Itinerant Marathi troupes staged Hindi plays in the Telugu districts and made money. Local companies copied their example, and audiences listened with delight to what they did not understand. The bliss of ignorance could not have been more forcibly illustrated.”

Literary prose in Telugu, as in many other languages, was, and still is, different from the spoken dialect. It was a highly artificial and conventional form. Progress in any language comes through a constant approximation of the literary to the spoken form. Pandits, however, discountenanced this approximation. Mr. Appa Rao, the author, found that the highly artificial and archaic literary Telugu was unsuited for the expression of living sentiments or for reaching the masses. He was one of the earliest and staunchest advocates of the claims of the spoken dialect. “I know it is not arguments that will evolve a new literary dialect for Telugu” he wrote. “A great writer must write and make it : let us prepare the ground for it.” With a view to prepare a model and demonstrate the practicability of his ideas he wrote this play. He has produced not a mere model but a masterpiece. He has set up a standard very difficult to approach. The language is superb : often it is

a model and demonstrate the practicability of his ideas he wrote this play. He has produced not a mere model but a masterpiece. He has set up a standard very difficult but a masterpiece. He has set up a standard very difficult to approach. The language is superb : often it is musical. If today most of the literary output in Telugu is written in the "Vyavaharikabhasha"-- the spoken dialect--not a little of the credit for this is due to him.

The second purpose with which this play was written was the advocacy of social reform. The need for social reform, in its manifold aspects of widow remarriage, the abolition of the practice of taking bride-money, the opposition to early marriages, and the abhorrence of the ideas of 'keeping' prostitutes is the theme of the drama. He has singled out, however, the practice of giving away in marriage mere babes to old men in consideration of fat sums, the practice of selling girls, for his broadside attack and dealt with other evils incidentally. He evolved a complex plot, and developed convincing characters with which to lay bare the social evils he was seeking to attack.

The central plot of the play is this : Agnihotravadhani, a bigoted, orthodox Brahmin, determines to give his second daughter, Subbi, aged about eight years, in marriage to Lubdhavadhani, a rich miser of sixty-five years, for a consideration of 1,800 rupees. Venkamma, Agnihotravadhani's wife, who was remorseful on account of the fate that already befell their first daughter, Butchamma, in similar circumstances, strongly objects to this, threatens to commit suicide if the plan is carried out, and entreats Karataka Sastri, her brother, to avert this calamity. Lubdhavadhani, the bridegroom, was first reluctant to get married. His desire for a wife was outweighed by his abhorrence of parting with money. But Ramappa Pantulu, the diplomat of the village, who made a living by his wits, frightens him into matrimony - notwithstanding the loss of money it might incidentally involve -- with the astrological prediction that his fate would be miserable unless he got married. Ramappa Pantulu further predicted that a wife now would be the cause of immense financial gain ! Karataka Sastri, finding it impossible to dissuade his brother-in-law from carrying out this project, resorts to subterfuge. Under the guise of one Guntur Sastri, with a disciple of his dressed up as his daughter, he approaches Ramappa Pantulu. With the help of Madhuravani, the dancing girl, a former friend of his but now in the 'keep' of Ramappa Pantulu, he prevails upon Ramappa Pantulu to consent to break this alliance with Agnihotravadhani, and instead to recommend his daughter to Lubdhavadhani. As an inducement to Lubdhavadhani for this change-over the new 'girl' is to be offered for Rs. 1,200 only, and Ramappa Pantulu is to get half of this sum for his services. Ramappa Pantulu forges a letter as from Agnihotravadhani refusing Lubdhavadhani's alliance, and settles the second match.

Ramappa Pantulu however finds that he was double-crossed and cheated out of his lawful share. In his absence Guntur Sastri was able

to persuade Lubdhavadhani to a 'one-night' marriage, get it celebrated and disappear with the money, leaving no trace behind. In anger and disgust, Ramappa Pantulu throws out a suggestion that the girl must have been a widow, surreptitiously married away a second time : otherwise, would the father have disappeared so completely? This works Lubdhavadhani into a state of hysteria: he has a nightmare that the former husband of his newly-wedded wife was strangling him to death. In the confusion that follows, the 'bride' slips away, and throwing off 'her' garb, joins his master. Ramappa Pantulu has borrowed a jewel from Madhuravani and lent it to the bride for the marriage. The disciple, before he joins his master, returns the jewel to Madhuravani, but Madhuravani refuses Ramappa Pantulu admission into the house unless he brings the jewel back. Lubdhavadhani finds that the bride has disappeared. Also, Ramappa Pantulu charges him with the murder of that girl and the theft of the jewel. Meanwhile, Agniotravadhani, in blissful ignorance of all that has happened, turns up for the marriage with an immense train of relations and friends, only to find that the intended bridegroom is already married. He chastises Lubdhavadhani physically, but Ramappa Pantulu induces him to finance the false case he was launching against Lubdhavadhani for the murder of the 'girl.' Agniotravadhani also finds that his first daughter—a child-widow and a victim of his greed - has eloped, during the journey, with her brother's tutor, Girisam. Agniotravadhani files a complaint against Girisam for abduction: but the girl's age being falsely given, and the full details regarding Girisam not being known, the case has to be left in the air and later withdrawn.

Theatended with a criminal complaint, and terribly ashamed of his folly in trying to get married in his old age, Lubdhavadhani falls at the feet of Saujanya Rao, an extremely good and virtuous lawyer. Under his influence Lubdhavadhani even consents to get his widowed daughter re-married. Saujanya Rao exposes the treachery of Ramappa Pantulu and warns him off. Meanwhile, Karataka Sastri, coming to know of the straits of which Lubdhavadhani has been reduced, comes to Madhuravani to request her to return the jewel so that he might send both the jewel and the money back to Lubdhavadhani which would be proof enough that he had not committed the crime. Madhuravani gives the jewel, but herself goes to Saujanya Rao. Saujanya Rao is a reformer; he had taken a vow that he would not see a dancing girl; therefore, she goes to him in male attire, and winning his confidence reveals herself, and the whole hoax of the marriage. The calamity is thus successfully averted. Lubdhavadhani learns his lesson and is won over to the path of reform. Agniotravadhani is unrepentent to the last, but what of it? His plans for marrying off his daughter had been successfully thwarted. His elder daughter had eloped. He had to spend most of his property in futile preparations for marriage, and in litigation against Lubdhavadhani and Girisam.

The plot tangles itself and is finally unravelled with rare skill ; events move with astonishing rapidity. The characters with which the drama is unfolded are varied, and are drawn from life with a depth of understanding.

Agnihotravadhani is a blind, bigoted, orthodox, pig-headed Brahmin. He is impatient of opposition or counsel ; he scorns diplomacy. His method is the frontal attack. He can be insensitive enough to abuse a guest who comes to his house ; prepare to marry off his daughter to a dying man in spite of the protests of his whole family—nay, notwithstanding the attempted suicide of his wife. He is unbending to the last. There is magnificence about his Himalayan stubbornness, for he knows not to stoop even to conquer.

Lubdhavadhani, the old bridegroom, in contrast to Agnihotravadhani, is a weakling. His only strength is his miserliness, but there is not enough strength even in his miserliness. The only redeeming feature, however, is that there is no nauseating meanness about him. While it is true that he counts the cost of everything, he can, it is obvious, be made to overlook that aspect by threats and intimidation. He is won over in the end to the cause of social reform, but it is a conversion born of sheer necessity. There is no spectacular "change of heart." To the end he remained a sop depending on one or other of his counsellors. He can only excite our pity, not our admiration like Agnihotravadhani or our sympathy like Madhuravani.

Ramappa Pantulu is made of sterner stuff. He is the diplomat *par excellence* ; the type that delights in making and unmaking empires. His is an extremely fertile brain; and he is never at a loss to extricate himself from any situation, however complex or difficult it might be. He has no heart, no scruple and no fear; he is a thorough-bred scoundrel, who never hesitates to commit any crime to serve his private gain. But there is no clumsiness about anything he does. To each plan of his, either of conception or of execution, he brings to bear immense skill. He makes one marvel at his dexterity !

Karataka Sastri is a match to Ramappa Pantulu in every respect: only, he is fortunately on the right side of law, and has used his powers for a righteous cause. He works with so great a smoothness that we almost miss taking note of him. He it is that foils the attempts of every one. The daring with which he plans and executes the hoax, and the skill with which he outwits even the vigilant Ramappa Pantulu are unrivalled.

Saujanya Rao is the strong, though not the silent, good man; but not one who makes a fetish of his principles. He, who took a vow not to see dancing girls, consents to kiss one - two extract evidence which will save Lubdhavadhani.

But there is no sweeter personality than Madhuravani in the whole range of Telugu dramatic literature. She is truer to life than Vasantasena; and dearer than most of the unbending virtuous heroines. She is

cultured, sophisticated and virtuous. She has her own principles, and plays the game majestically. There is no vulgarity in her. She can bring a man to ruin, heartlessly ; deceive him without any qualms of conscience ; and yet rise to great heights to sacrifice in the most matter-of-fact way. Her profession has not killed her finer sentiments.

Into this complex plot is introduced Girisam. Girisam is the tutor of Venkatesam, the son of Agnihotravadhani, and he is related to Lubdhavadhani. He is a typical social reformer of the spurious kind—a social reformer because social reform is the fashion! His capacity for brilliant conversation is his strength. It is merely unfortunate, of course, that he now and then finds it convenient to change his principles, but he is never at a loss to find convincing arguments in justification ; likewise it is unfortunate that he cannot put his principles into practice. Dancing girls are his weakness and he is compelled to be anti - notch in theory! Girisam is a lovable rogue. But he is not evil - minded. Compared to Ramappa Pantulu, he is a saint. While Ramappa Pantulu seduces and deserts Meenakshi, the widowed daughter of Lubdhavadhani, Girisam, placed in similar circumstances, plans for an elopement and for a sanctified marriage with Butchamma, the widowed daughter of Agnihotravadhani. Girisam is often childish in his bluffs. "To talk with me in itself is an education" is his boast. But there is grandeur in the sweep of his imagination, that takes our breath away and endears him to everybody. He moves across the stage like a Colossus, vanquishing his opponents by his 'dynamic logic.' A sample of his 'brilliant' logic may be given. From an opponent of early marriages he turns, under stress of circumstances, into a supporter of them, justifying his conduct with this argument: "Widow-marriage is the best form of social reform—the sign of civilisation. 'Widow' means of course a young beautiful widow and not an old crony with half a dozen children. How can there be young widows without infant marriages? Hence infant marriages are essential !" So much imagination and wit have gone to the making of the character of Girisam that he is today as concrete as a living personality to the Telugus.

As far as the plot is concerned, however, Girisam is not essential; as a matter of fact, he is out of place. In the drama, he is merely the person with whom Butchamma elopes. Girisam must have taken the author himself by storm, and argued and bluffed his way into the drama!

STATUE WEEPS

GEORGE MOSES

If statues can weep,
the garlanded Mother Indira
with her deep maternal wound
would have screamed aloud
witnessing her first-born
shattered by a vily garlander's
concealed plastic bomb.

The lamentation of Mother Indira
would have rent the skies
echoed and re-echoed from Himalayas to Cape,
like the lamentation of the mothers,
when Herod massacred the innocent
first-born babes in Judea.
To gather dark clouds o'er the globe.

If statues can move,
the bereaved mother would have
from her pedestal jumped, collected your mortal remains
and laid you across
her maternal lap,
shed her maternal tears
and stir'd the world to mourn.

Were I a Michael Angelo,
I would chisel her in marble
with Rajiv laid across her lap
like that sad statue of Mother Mary in Rome
to instal it in Delhi
for tourists to gaze and weep.
A monument of
The Mother in distress.

Note : The late leader garlanded the statue of his great mother
in the vicinity just before his ghastly assassination.

GIRISAM LOOKS AT LIFE

T. Raghavachari

[*Kalaprapurna* T. Raghavachari (popularly known as Bellary Raghavachari) was a leading lawyer of Bellary and was one of the greatest actors of South India. Besides portraying many major roles in Telugu and Kannada plays, he won high encomiums for his talent in acting leading roles in Othello, Hamlet and other English dramas also. He was the first -- and perhaps the last -- Telugu actor who participated in English dramas in England where he was appalauded for his extraordinary talent in acting. The following are extracts from a lecture he delivered at the Andhra University in 1934. *Girisam* is a leading character in *Kanya-sulkam*. -- Editor]

Resplendent Ratnahara

Oftentimes I have dreamed about *Girisam*, the adorable offspring of the late Gurajada Appa Rao who, with his *Kanyasulkam*, has thrown a resplendent *Ratnahara* over the shoulders of the Andhra dramatic muse. This ornament still shines unmatched. What a darling child is *Girisam* ! To me *Girisam* is not an ease-loving, cigar-smoking, muffler-wearing, cane-swinging, curly-headed, gallivanting, crooked-minded adventurer. He represents to me the irresponsible youthful Andhra spirit which dives deep and drags to the surface the grotesque and pathetic-looking crabs and tadpoles of our society and plays with them. His eleven causes of the degeneration of India are no fanciful bluster to me. I really think that *Girisam's* eleven causes of the degeneration of India are painfully true. Like the master artist he is, he does not spoil the picture by enumerating them seriatim. He wants us to think about them seriously. Perhaps his own life and exploits disclose to us what the eleven causes are. I have oftentimes wondered about the eleven causes and now I propose to think aloud about them.

Most of you love *Girisam*--if for nothing else, at least for his fascinating weaknesses. Bear with me for his sake. *Girisam* says he delivered his lecture in the Poona Deccan College. At once our memory is tingled with the sacred memories of the great Bal Gangadhar Tilak. The eleven causes should be real and telling indeed for he says that

all the professors assembled there became speechless. That one and all the professors should have been affected in such a remarkable manner indicates that the eleven causes should have a direct bearing on the ordinary, everyday life of society and the individual as well.

Education for the Good of Society

In the very first scene, Girisam refers to the eleven causes of degeneration in impressing upon his dear Chela Venkatesam, the basic principles of true education, which he so definitely suggests should be based not so much upon books and examinations as upon direct contact and association with the Guru. He cleverly leads us to think over the expression Upadesa which is the keynote of the ancient Aryan system of education. What a vista of beautiful pictures and thoughts is at once opened up before us ! Education is sitting near your teacher who, like a loving magnet, will draw out the best in you and make you bigger and comelier and the end of education would be to gain access to the proximity of the greatest teacher of all and become absolutely perfect.

Again Girisam bursts out with righteous indignation at the lopsidedness of our system of education which gives a wicked importance to a pass and fail to reckon the chastening influence of a failure in life. He asks Venkatesam pertinently whether his teacher had the command of the language which the pupil had. In other words, he questions whether the teacher could express himself as well as Venkatesam, the student. Now this takes us to a careful consideration of the art of expression which is a very important factor in the scheme of education. It is the power of expression that denotes the standard of education, learning by itself would not be discharging all its obligations, if it cannot express itself clearly and correctly for the good of society. Correct expression is based upon a good command of the language and a precise use of the words. Education which does not lovingly help the student to think out for himself and bring out the best gift and talent in himself and which does not equip him with the appropriate form of expression to serve the needs of society, could be pardonably called a waste of time.

Eluding Creditors

Again in the same first scene our dear friend Girisam reveals his remarkable talent for making other people pay for his pleasures and expenses. The other day I was reading about the publication of a book which professes to teach the honourable and ever-growing band of impecunious gentlemen in this country, the excellent art of avoiding one's creditors. He says *yetu chuchina andariki bakile*. (surrounded by creditors) He reminds us of the canons and the picture is complete. Demands to the right of him, demands to the left of him, demands in front of him and demands behind him. Girisam eludes them all like the mysterious Houdini. In Girisam's case, an ignorant world could not

appreciate his talents, nay his genius, and he was consequently obliged to put other people's money into his purse and laugh at the Bill Collectors. He could afford to snap his fingers at debts generally; and he dramatically illustrates to us the advantages of a Brahmin debtor who, with the help of his scared-thread, can always exorcise the spirit of a dunning agent. All debtors are not blessed with the resources and nonchalance of a Girisam.

There is also the case of some non-Brahmins, who do not possess the advantage of a scared-thread. There are some Brahmins as well who have discarded the sacred-thread as a mark of their liberty, independence and high culture. It looks therefore that all things considered, debts are to be avoided by the average man. A debt might be the result of either an absence of income or the waste of income. I think that Girisam was thinking of the latter cause; for to him, earning of income could not have presented many difficulties. So waste of money as a potent cause of indebtedness should have been prominent in Girisam's thoughts. We see thus two of the eleven causes of the degeneration of India according to Girisam indicated in the very opening scene of the play. Is he right? That is the question. Waste of time and waste of money.

Wasting our money, wasting our time, dissipating our bodily energy by wasting our powers of intellection and observation--can it be said that we are really enjoying life?

Poking Noses

When he says "*think annadaya inglishwadu*," I think Girisam is right. We are not encouraged to think from the beginning. As children our instincts of curiosity are severely snubbed and as students our opportunities for observation are severely cut. Our spiritual preceptors are deadly against our liberty of thought. The result is apparent. Our brain power is wasted. Conclusions are arrived at hastily and opinions are expressed without any ascertainment of facts. I should like to think of two dire evils which arise from this waste of our thinking faculties and the consequent anemia of brain-power it brings on. One makes us uncharitable and the other makes us unmanly. Let me try to explain myself.

There is a tendency in the uneducated man to find a peculiar occupation for his nose--to poke into other people's affairs and to imagine odours at the faintest atmosphere. It is regrettable but it is a fact that the uneducated mind jumps to pick holes in others and strain its ears believe ill of others. A little thought, a little reckoning, a little consideration of the pros and cons, a little judicious feeling, would certainly clean the atmosphere of a society from the petrifying influences of scandal. Gossiping, which unfortunately is seeking to enter the portals of schools and colleges and tends to ruin the young mind, is unmanly and uncharitable. I need not waste your time,

by elaborating over the far-reaching evil consequences (to the society as well as to the individuals) which result from a habit of indulging in thoughtless talk and careless opinions.

Self is dead - Long Live the Self

The next kind of waste that Girisam must have thought about is of wasting of talents.

There is one talent, faculty or gift that is common to all human beings; and that is the greatest talent which is implanted in us by supreme force, out of its infinite mercy. It is the latent talent of self-forgetfulness or self-effacement. The greatest triumph of all knowledge is self-discovery or self-realization. I think self-effacement and self-realization are so closely connected together that one leads to the other. This latent talent should be grown and developed to its fullest extent. That is the key-note of our ancient Aryan culture. That is the key-note of our Sanatana Dharma. I mean the real stuff -- not the camouflage which recently failed to get an entry into the Legislative Assembly at Delhi.

Charles Landford in his book "India: The Land of Regrets" refers to Mahatma Gandhi as follows: "He is so difficult to deal with because he is so deeply, so sincerely self-effacing. He seeks nothing for himself. He really does live his enemies. He is so ready to die for his faith and his people." This talent of self-effacement helps us to cry out hastily, "The self is dead. Long live the self." The lower and touch-me-not self is dead; and long lives the higher and all-embracing self. Real life shines only after the lower and touch-me-not self is burnt up. The spark which kindles the fire to burn up the doer is also within us.

Art Beautifies Creation

Side by side with the histrionic instinct, there is the instinct of song, the faculty of music, implanted in us. We should develop this faculty and not waste it. The most powerful engine which enables the soul to reach the highest altitude is music. The most effective soothing draught to quieten the horrowing restlessness of one's mind is music. The most eloquent poet who can describe beauty is music. The Kohinoor on the diadem of love is music. The philosophic stone which can transmute any hard egoism into flexible gold of self-effacement is music. The lure which can draw the individual soul into the infinite is music. This instinct of music should be found and encouraged.

Girisam should have deplored the Indian's indifference to the development of his artistic sense and artistic temperament. The dreadful waste of such faculties should have shocked him. It is art that beautifies and strengthens creation. It is art that discovers in nature the wonderful mother who blesses all. It is art that destroys the artificial barriers between man and man. It is art that leads self-expression into self-expansion and finally into self-effacement. It is art that trains our ears

to catch the strains of Krishna's Murali. Art is the stroke of chisel that knocks off the excrescence in our composition and makes us perfect to deserve the love of Krishna. It is art which helps us to cast off our load of garments and appendages and blitholes to fall in step with the mighty Sankara in his glorious dance of death--full of life.

What a calamity, Girisam should have thought, that one should neglect the development of fine arts (which reveal to us the glory and strength of life) and waste the faculty of fine arts implanted in us. Can we consciously say that our centres of education, whether it be our houses, schools or colleges, afford us the necessary opportunities to foster and develop the latent faculties for arts in our young men. There is marked inclination on the other hand, to discountenance such instincts and waste the talents. This kind of waste is one of the potent causes of the degeneration of India and her culture.

Along with the waste of our thinking or reasoning faculties, Girisam must have thought of the habit of one's waste of emotion as a probable fifth cause of the degeneration of our society. The Andhras are said to be very emotional. As a matter of fact, I am afraid, all Indians are emotional; also commotional and unnecessarily so. To be emotional without any real progressive motion or moment is not a great virtue. I am reminded of Mr. S.V. Ramamurti's presidential speech on the occasion of the fourth Andhra Nataka Kala Parishat held in Madras during last December. He said that Andhras were very enthusiastic in starting works; but it was the Tamil genius that kept up the works going. This is a matter for consideration. Mr. Ramamurti's observation upsets a text which was often quoted by my father "*arambhasuraha khalu dakshinatyaha*." However Mr. Ramamurti's opinion cannot but be a carefully considered one. If he is true, (I am inclined to agree with him) our emotions which effervesce without any practical results are sheer waste. Girisam must have noticed this habit of waste with great regret.

Do Nothing and Multiply

Take the case of the joint family system. There was need for the system in the olden days. It is a matter for careful consideration whether the system is necessary in the present days. Is the system adding to our man-power or detracting from it? Is it not a common sight that one man is obliged to earn and feed a number of drones who do nothing but marry and multiply? Is it not a fact that in a joint family the moment the earning member passes away his widow is thrown entirely on the tender mercies of ill-educated, uncultured, pleasure-seeking and selfish junior members who live mostly by the law of survivorship? Is it not a fact that most of us are suffering under this system, swayed by false feelings of sympathy and charity? Our feelings of sympathy and charity, unless they can be turned into good account for the good of society, are sheer waste of our emotional springs and tend certainly to degenerate our strength.

I was reading the other day about fine places during the winter cold in the Punjab. They have chimneys and the way they are constructed allows the heat to escape through the chimney. Instead of distributing heat to the needy people around, the construction takes most of the heat away to the skies through the chimney. Are our ideas of charity, fellow-feeling and sympathy, similarly found? Is it a waste? Girisam perhaps thought it was. Next I am led to think of Girisam's views on man's emotions, his feelings of charity, self-sacrifice, self-respect and so forth. They were very sound indeed. Girisam never wasted his emotions. He had no sickly sentiment about such feelings. When Venkamma accidentally fell into a well, he was there to risk his life and rescue her ; but he never cared for Venkamma's feelings, when he proposed to elope to Greta Green with the beautiful Butchamma; for the elopement had a double object in it, the object of re-stringing the lyre of Butchamma's life and that of averting the danger of disastrous marriage to Subbamma.

I think of Girisam's relations, first with Putakullamma, second with Madhuravani and the third with Butchamma. All three were good-looking. I think the way Putakullamma is personated on the stage is not to my liking. All were attractive and beautiful. Girisam however knew how to control emotions and use them to the best advantage of society. Putakullamma's profession was to give food for money. Girisam got food without money. There it ended. Madhuravani's incident is apparent enough. Now consider his emotions as regards Butchamma. They were used to understand a fellow-being and to advance the cause of social reform. Emotions which effervesce without any practical results are sheer waste of human energy.

More Voice than Necessary

Certainly Girisam should have waxed eloquent over the waste of youth, waste of flesh and blood, waste of breath and the non-development and (consequently) waste of will power as some of the other causes of the degeneration of India. We have no well-known institution or organisation for the education of our voices. Even our music schools as well as our education classes do not appear to attach sufficient importance to voice training. The ancient Aryan culture paid particular attention to the art of regulating one's breath. The chanting of Vedic hymns, I consider, as a wonderful lesson in the art of voice education. I think of the present day South Indian stage and the huge waste of breath on it. It is only very few actors that can control their breath, avoid waste and use it to the best advantage. Anger, grief and love are all pitched in the same key. All sentiments are more or less shouted out. I am alive to the handicaps in the ways of the actors. I am alive to the unscientific construction of our theatres. I am alive to the counter-voices caused in the auditorium by soda-openers and picnic-makers. Nevertheless I am inclined to think that more voice than necessary is spent on the stage. This waste is more apparent in court-halls. If shouting is

considered to be an important factor in the histrionic art it is (by many) considered to be an all important factor in the demonstration of one's forensic capability. This art of shouting appears to be infecting the bench as well. If I think of our meetings (especially of the Kala Parishat) and the way we shout at one another, the way we shout all together, at the Chairman and the way the Chairman, the proposer, the seconder and the rest--all join in shouting at the press-reporters present. There is tremendous waste of voice. The art of modulating one's voice and regulating one's breath, adds to the cultural strength of a human being and the waste thereof is decidedly a sign of degeneration.

Paucity of Maidens

Next Girisam goes into raptures over the beauties of country life, dwells lovingly over the luxuries of best tobacco, best curd and best ghee. At the same time he regrets that our country does not possess "maidens" which according to him is a colossal Kalankam. The paucity of maidens in India strikes him as a real defect and perhaps as a potent cause for the degeneration of our society. When I read it, I pondered over the question and it struck me that there was something peculiar about the several stages of life amongst Indians. Are there many real youths in India?

Dictionaries describe youth as the period between childhood and manhood. I believe, in practical life, we can easily conceive what manhood is. I would like to think of youth as that period, when a human being is afforded opportunities to imbibe all that is best for his further progress and evolution, without a care or thought. It is a period when a human being is supposed to enjoy the best of health, the best of spirits, without any worry, without any encumbrances or drags, no sense of fatigue and looks upon the world as a huge big play-house. That is the time to develop a sense of robust optimism. That is the time when sickly germs which breed the superiority complex, isolation and exclusiveness and misappropriation can be more or less successfully knocked out of the system. The period of youth is necessary--absolutely necessary--for the growth of the individual himself and also for the benefit of society. The period of youth acts as a blessing to the individual by leading him into these rare and useful experiences and society gets its best entertainment from its youth.

Often speakers and orators from the stage and platform proclaim that the youth form the very backbone of our society; the youth of today becomes the leader of tomorrow and the destinies of poor Mother India are in the hands of the youth. It is all well and good and the said speakers and orators get thunderous claps for expressing such glorious views. The question however is, are there any youths in Hindu society? Does our system of marriage and our conception of married life recognize any such period of youthful existence in our youngmen? CC-0. In Public Domain. Gurukul Kangri Collection, Haridwar

Life with us is divided into four stages--Balya, Youvana, Koumara and Vardhakya. Youvana, I think, corresponds more or less to the period of youth. Koumara, I am told, is connected with Kumaras and Kumaris, i.e., children. Kumaradasa starts therefore with children. Now comes the difficulty. The average Indian is married between 14 and 16, begets children at 18 and becomes a grandfather between 32 and 34. His Koumaradasa therefore starts at 18 or say 20. I hope I shall not be very wrong if I consider that Balyadasa will be finished by 14. According to the Madras Children Act of 1920, a child means a person under the age of 14 years. Thus, we have a period of nearly four years or at the most five years to youth or Youvanaavastha. Giving a grace of four years more, this period is only for a term of ten years, seven of which will have to be deducted for sleep, food and other calls. That leaves us a glorious period of three years to gain all the wonderful experiences of youth. Is not Girisam justified in deploring the absence of maidens in our country? His omission to refer to the male denomination, specially, may have been due to his anxiety not to offend the feelings of boys.

No Wall between this World and the Other

I believe Girisam has illustrated to us several kinds of waste which may have been reckoned by him in his famous lecture: (1) waste of money (2) waste of time (3) waste of artistic talents (4) waste of powers of intellection (5) waste of emotions (6) waste of charity (7) waste of youthful existence (8) waste of breath and (9) waste of physical energies in general.

I have no doubt whatever that Girisam believed firmly that the prime cause for all this huge waste lay in an unnatural and impracticable conception of life.

I am not at all inclined to perceive any blasphemy in his statement that pleasures in heaven are assured if you have already enjoyed them in this world. It is true to me. I cannot conceive of any Chinese wall dividing this world from the other worlds, including heaven. No truer statement was ever made than the one that the mind is its own place. It makes a heaven of hell and hell of heaven. Turn the kaleidoscope; earth is seen. Turn it again, heaven is visible. No change of places at all. The turning is in our power. I am afraid that as long as one concentrates on a heaven which is far away somewhere, one can never be satisfied with this world, which would be an insult to the impartiality of the maker of these globes.

Happiness or joy may be considered as an easementary right. Long open continuous and uninterrupted enjoyment as right establishes a right of way. Happiness must be openly and continuously enjoyed as of right and in an uninterrupted manner in this world, so that we acquire inviolable rights to enjoy Ananda, after we have shuffled off this mortal coil. The key to the definition of such happiness lies in the two words;

uninterrupted and as of right. Interruption comes in only when there is a break or cessation. In Ananda this cessation is ordinarily the outcome of fatigue or, may be, regret. Uninterrupted enjoyment of Ananda may therefore refer to such Ananda as containing no elements of reaction or regret in it.

Let me consider the other expression "as of right". The Sukha or Ananda should be enjoyed "as of right". That is possible only for one to catch the strains of Krishna's Murali. Art is the stroke of chisel that knocks off the excrescences in our composition and makes us perfect to deserve the love of Krishna. It is art which helps us to cast off our load of garments and appendages and blitholes to fall in step with the mighty Sankara in his glorious dance of death--full of life.

What a calamity, Girisam should have thought, that one should neglect the development of fine arts (which reveal to us the glory and strength of life) and waste the faculty of fine arts implanted in us. Can we consciously say that our centres of education, whether it be our houses, schools or colleges, afford us the necessary opportunities to foster and develop the latent faculties for arts in our young men. There is marked inclination on the other hand, to discountenance such instincts and waste the talents. This kind of waste is one of the potent causes of the degeneration of India and her culture.

Along with the waste of our thinking or reasoning faculties, Girisam must have thought of the habit of one's waste of emotion as a probable fifth cause of the degeneration of our society. The Andhras are said to be very emotional. As a matter of fact, I am afraid, all Indians are emotional; also commotional and unnecessarily so. To be emotional without any real progressive motion or moment is not a great virtue. I am reminded of Mr. S.V. Ramamurti's presidential speech on the occasion of the fourth Andhra Nataka Kala Parishat held in Madras during last December. He said that Andhras were very enthusiastic in starting works; but it was the Tamil genius that kept up the works going. This is a matter for consideration. Mr. Ramamurti's observation upsets a text which was often quoted by my father "*arambhasuraha khalu dakshinatyaaha*." However Mr. Ramamurti's opinion cannot but be a carefully considered one. If he is true, (I am inclined to agree with him) our emotions which effervesce without any practical results are sheer waste. Girisam must have noticed this habit of waste with great regret.

Do Nothing and Multiply

Take the case of the joint family system. There was need for the system in the olden days. It is a matter for careful consideration whether the system is necessary in the present days. Is the system adding to our man-power or detracting from it? Is it not a common sight that one man is obliged to earn and feed a number of drones who do nothing but marry and multiply? Is it not a fact that in a joint family the moment

the earning member passes away his widow is thrown entirely on the tender mercies of ill-educated, uncultured, pleasure-seeking and selfish junior members who live mostly by the law of survivors? Is it not a fact that most of us are suffering under this system, swayed by false feelings of sympathy and charity? Our feelings of sympathy and charity, unless they can be turned into good account for the good of society, are sheer waste of our emotional springs and tend certainly to who considers Ananda as his birth-right--as his nature. In other words one would feel happy always, unconsciously radiate happiness all round just as a rose which would always smell sweet and distribute its sweet smell all round. According to Girisam therefore this world is meant to give such pleasures and a person who can find and enjoy such pleasures does establish a right of easement for happiness in the other worlds. This outlook of life in this world welcomes Samsara and does not condemn it. It is a strong man's outlook. Fear and weakness dare not approach it. It certainly discourages beggary. Begging for admissions, begging for appointments, begging for engagements and begging even to remain yours truly. Conception of such a life and the determination to live up to it require the development of one's will power.

Girisam's series of exploits indicate that he was a man of great will power and he ever kept the power in perfect trim. The final scene proves his wonderful self-possession. To me Girisam was not defeated. In the last scene, at considerable self-sacrifice, he let us into the secret of the great Saujanya Rao Pantulu's weakness. That paragon of virtues, love of truth, upholder of justice and friend of the oppressed cannot after all get over certain sentimental prejudices. The Pantulu deems as a contamination the very touch and the very atmosphere of a streetwalker. With great reluctance he unbends to bestow a kiss upon that noble woman who was pure and good at heart. Between the Pantulu and Madhuravani I take my hat off to Madhuravani. I thank Girisam for bringing about this denouement, for I believe Girisam deliberately continued to get this effect. If he was sensuous and selfish, he need not have re-appeared after he eloped with Butchamma. He would have married her and stayed where he was.

Some evil-minded persons may say that Girisam took the best and coveted the adoption. I do not believe it. He knew enough law to file a suit for the Stridhanam properties of Butchamma. I am sure Girisam did not want to marry Butchamma. In his heart of hearts, he knew that marriage would come in the way of his service. He carried her away to expose certain dangers which lurk in our society. And he came back to mock at society by showing up that even its great Saujanya Rao Pantulu was full of prejudices which breed divisions and stand against the principles of equality and freedom in society.

Now, gentlemen, I have tried my best and I have been able to imagine 10 causes of waste (including the waste of will power which I have indicated last) which very probably formed the subject-matter

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of Girisam's lecture. You know Girisam better than I. Consequently you will be in a position to teach me something more about him. I am ready to learn.

It is true I could not think of the eleventh cause; but I have a suspicion what it is.

THE REAL AND THE REFLECTED

Preety Sengupta

Competitors both :
Pristine waters, bright skies
Keeps trying to win hearts
Of unsoiled shapes.
The snow-clad stones
black peeping out stealthily
See themselves in the mirror
A melody spreads in the air.
No reason for mermaids to shed tears
Where there are no swells
Nor unnecessary strife.

Everything the way it is,
the way it seems,
the way it should be,
Everything, the same, at the same time
Mixed, subtle, and yet simple.
What is on the surface is deep down,
What is on the face is in the heart.
Everything, the same -original and copied,
The same - losing and winning,
winning and losing.

VISWANATHA SATYANARAYANA HIS CONTRIBUTION TO LITERATURE

C. SUBBARAO

It is difficult to think of another writer of our age in Telugu whose literary work has been characterized by such variety, profundity and immensity as that of Sri Viswanatha Satyanarayana. Viswanatha, as he is endearingly called, is a versatile writer *par excellence*. There is not a literary genre in Telugu which has not been enriched by his genius. He has written voluminously : his work in all its forms runs literally to thousands of pages. He has written poetry like "Andhra Prasasthi" and "Jhansi Rani" celebrated for their fluency of style and patriotic fervor, "Telugu Rutuvulu" and "Sringaraveedhi" for their beautiful word pictures suffused with delicateness of imagery. "Girikumaruni Prema Gitalu" and "Sasidutam" for their romantic intensity and lyrical beauty, and "Kinnerasani Paatalu" and "Viswanatha Maddhyakkaralu" for their musical quality and prosodic perfection. Of course, there is his *magnum opus* "Srimad Ramayana Kalpavriksham" for which he has got the Jnanpeeth Award, the result of his poetic and spiritual brooding and meditation for decades.

"The Ramayana" for Viswanatha, is not merely the story of Rama, the Divine Archer, but the story of the Indian psyche, its responses under trying circumstances, the triumph of the spirit over the matter, the supremacy of values over interests and the enthroning of Dharma as much in the hearts of men as in their affairs. It is legacy of values patterned beautifully in the very texture of the story of Rama and Sita. Values like humility, courtesy, love and respect to all, courage, beautifulness, truthfulness, single-minded devotion between spouses, impartiality, respectful devotion to parents and elders, and above all a need for sacrifice and self-abnegation. Viswanatha has followed Valmiki in the narration of the story, but he has made a few beautiful alterations. In *Valmiki Ramayana*, Parasurama's encounter with Rama is after Sita Swayamvaram. But in Viswanatha's "Kalpavriksham" this encounter occurs after Sivadhanurbhangam but before Swayamvaram. Parasurama is also a Vishnu incarnation, and there can't be two incarnations of Vishnu at the time of Swayamvaram. Rama accepts Parasurama's challenge, and, while receiving the Vaishnava

Dhanussu from Parasurama, draws all the strength and power of the incarnation from him. Now Rama is a complete Avatar and this is beautiful. There are a few more such beautiful things like "Hamsadyutam". As we start reading the "Kalpavriksham", we are ushered into the classical Tretayuga by the magic of his diction, description and delineation.

The range and extent of his fiction-writing is breathtaking. He has written in all dozens of novels. He has written more than a dozen novels on a variety of themes like "Veyipadagalu", "Dharmachakram", "Ekaveera", "Mroyutummeda", "Baddanna Senani", etc. Not only these; besides these, he has written a series of novels grouped together as "Puranavaira grandhamala". He says that European historians have distorted our history. He believes that our Puranas are history. So he embarks upon a gigantic task of reconstructing the ancient Indian history in fictionform in a series of novels like "Bhagavantunimeedi paga", "Vedavati", "Nando Raja Bhavishyati", "Naastika Dhumam", etc., based on our Puranas. Our Puranas may be history or not; but one should bow one's head in salute to Viswanatha for his genius for literary creation, for painstaking research, for his crusading zeal, and above all, for his pride in our national heritage and culture. Forming part of his prodigious literary output are also there a collection of short stories.

If his *magnum opus* in poetry is "Srimad Ramayana Kalpavriksham" his *magnum opus* in prose fiction is "Veyipadagalu". It is a novel in more than a thousand pages depicting the story of transitional phases that occur over almost a century at a small village, Subbannapeta, now a full-blown municipal town at the end of the story. The atmosphere in which the novel is set is harmoniously composed of three vital entities--the old zamindari system, the temple culture and the village life. The bygone age characterised by perfect social harmony, by love, friendliness and cooperation among various sections of society together with personal contentment and fair dealing and fellow feeling is beautifully contrasted with growing social tensions, cunning, acquisitiveness and utter unconcern for others.

The whole story revolves round Dharmarao, the hero of the novel in whom, it is said, Viswanatha has projected himself. The chapters in which the illness and the death of Dharmarao's wife are shown are among the most poignant and pathetic parts in literature. "Veyipadagalu" makes such an absorbing reading and claims so totally our attention that even after the book is finished and closed, we continue to be haunted by the pathos and fineness in the lives of its characters. We like to go back to the book again and again.

Viswanatha's mind is inventive and creative; it is also critical, analytical and logical. He is considered one of the best literary critics in Telugu. His critical studies, "Nannayagari Prasanna Katha

Kalitartha Yuktī, "Allasanivari Allika Gigibigi" and "Saakuntalabhignyata" are fine examples of his critical perception and logical analysis.

He is a scholar whose scholarship stretches over oceanic proportions. He has read with insight all classics in Sanskrit and Telugu; he has read with insight every worthwhile book in English literature, endless in continental literature in English translation. He refers with a telling effect to various such works in his writing.

He is a delightful speaker, but quite often moody and easily irritated. If he is in rapport with his audience, he can speak brilliantly for hours. If he isn't he can unhesitatingly terminate his speech most abruptly and resume his seat.

He can be very hard if provoked. But beneath his deceptive hardness, there lies a very kind, a very loving and a very tender heart which melts at the sight of distress or suffering. "*Nindumanambu navya navaneeta samanamu, palku darunakhandala sastra thuiyamu*" -- these words of Nannaya are so true of Viswanatha.

Viswanatha is a man of remarkable originality and independence of mind. He is a man of vigorous intellect who has the courage of his convictions. He is dubbed a conservative by his opponents, and he has many of them. He is not opposed to everything modern as they allege, but he is a literary crusader upholding certain values enshrined in our ancient tradition. He wants a value-based assessment of an institution or tradition. Anything that promotes peace, progress, friendship and love among people is to be welcomed whether it is modern or ancient. The contemporary social reality vitiated by industrialisation, urbanisation and competitive economic compulsions has deeply disturbed him. Viswanatha is deeply anguished over the moral degeneration of the modern times. This anguish, this agony of his deeply felt experience is transparent in all his works. He calls this anguish, this agony, "Jeevuni Vedana" arising out of social, moral and spiritual alienation. His contribution to literature is solid and substantial. Poets and writers of passing fashion are for their times, but Viswanatha is for all times.

Smt. K. SAVITRI AMMAL

B. RAMAMURTHI

[Smt. K. Savitri Ammal was associated with *Triveni* as a member of the Advisory Board for about sixty years, until she passed away. She contributed a number of valuable articles on varied subjects, besides reviews of books. *Triveni* is greatly indebted to Savitri Ammal and also to her illustrious brothers K. Balasubramania Iyer and K. Chandrasekharan for the invaluable help rendered by them to *Triveni*. *Triveni* pays sincere homage to Savitri Ammal. --Editor]

Smt. K. Savitri Ammal was born on 5-5-1898 as the third daughter of V. Krishnaswamy Iyer and Valambal amongst the two sons and four daughters. Her brothers were late illustrious *Dharma Rakshamani* K. Balasubramania Iyer, and the connoisseur of art, literature and music, Sri K. Chandrasekharan.

The entire family had the early tragedy of losing their mother in 1909 and their brilliant father V. Krishnaswamy Iyer in 1911, when he was barely 48 years old and at the height of his glory as an Executive Member of the Madras Governor's Council. Savitri Ammal was only 13 years old at that time. She grew up under the care of her brother K. Balasubramania Iyer at Madras.

Young Savitri had her formal schooling in Rani Vijayanagaram School, Mylapore (no longer there now). But as higher studies for girls was not looked upon with favour in those days by orthodox South Indian Brahmin families, Savitri had to discontinue her education even in Form I. All her subsequent knowledge was self-acquired and it is to her credit that she became proficient in English, Tamil and Sanskrit. In fact, her talent in English and Tamil reached such a stage that she became capable of writing short stories, essays, articles, pen-sketches and reviews in both the languages.

She got married to Pattabhirama Iyer in June 1908. Pattabhirama Iyer was the eldest son of Maruthuvakudi Sivarama Iyer, a landlord of Thanjavur District with a large family. Savitri Ammal had no progeny of her own and her husband passed away in 1948.

Savitri Ammal stayed with her brother. She devoted most of her attention to intellectual pursuits and became a notable writer of standing in English and Tamil in Madras. She had contributed many articles to *Triveni*, the reputed literary and cultural magazine. She used to write essays and short-stories in Tamil to "Kalaimagal", a popular literary journal of Madras. She also translated into Tamil Rt.Hon. V.S. Srinivasa Sastri's "Lectures on Ramayana" which was greatly appreciated in the literary world in Madras and elsewhere.

Apart from her scholarliness, she was proficient in the art of Carnatic vocal music and could also play well on the Veena. She inaugurated Dikshitar Kritis in All India Radio, Madras, in 1937.

Though patrimony from her father was meager, due to her careful investment of the same, it grew in proportion to enable her to make charities suitable to her disposition. The Savitri Ammal Oriental School was started and founded by her in 1958. The school is functioning well, having become a Higher Secondary School and now has as many as 450 students comprised of boys and girls.

She was of a generous nature and gave donations totalling about Rs. 2 lakhs -- to Vidya Mandir, Lady Sivaswamy Iyer Girls' High School, Venkataramana Dispensary (Ayurvedic College) and to the Madras University for conducting annual Endowment Lectures in memory of K. Balasubrahmaniam Iyer and cash gifts to all her kith and kin.

Her service to the cause of education is significant. She was President of the Vidya Mandir, Mylapore, from 1976 to 1985 which she voluntarily relinquished due to advancing years. She was a Committee Member of the Lady Sivaswamy Iyer Girls' High School from 1956 to 1982. She was selfless in her aspirations and outlook and considered the welfare and progress of others as her own.

Even though Savitri Ammal's achievements were praiseworthy, she was modest and unassuming. She was particular about discipline and propriety always. She was strict without being harsh.

She passed away on October 16, 1992, at the ripe old age of 95 years.

Her entire life was a saga of self-denial and a rich texture of learning and culture. May her soul rest in peace !

S A N S K R I T

B. RAMAMURTHI

The unseemly controversy about language

To what purpose none can gauge.

Sanskrit is acknowledged voice of the Vedas.

Conversational vocabulary of the Devas.

Pronounced most suitably by computer.

No linguist can ever achieve better

Hoary tradition's home is Sanskrit

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Doubtless supreme by sheer merit.

THE GITA FOR EVERY MAN

Prof. G.N. SARMA

D.V.G.'s* exposition of the Bhagavad Gita is unique in the vast literature on the "Song Celestial". It is the record of talks before an audience seeking guidance in the real concerns of living. It is not a deliberate work of philosophical discussion or dry, intellectual analysis. Even where philosophical problems are taken up, academic interest is subordinated to practical concern. Material for explanation and illustration is taken up from everyday life. It is an easy, informal and clear stream of discourse without the ponderousness of a formal composition. As the author describes it, it is the conversation of a "common man" with other common men. "Intricate, distant and sacred questions of Religion, Reality, Dharma and Divinity are not for me," says the author,.... such has been my belief from the outset. It was not my good fortune to have had transcendental experiences, concentration on religious austerities, or the philosophical knowledge to qualify me for the exposition of abstruse problems."

D.V.G's outlook is rationalistic without being opposed to revelation and tradition. He seeks to combine and synthesise the spirit of modern science and rationalism with that of revelation and tradition emphasised by orthodox commentators. He accepts the validity of suprarational or revealed truths from genuinely inspired and authentic sources but stresses on the need for caution because this is the most fertile field for deception and fraud by varieties of godmen and religious impostors.

Revealed truths fall outside the range of the senses and the reason but they cannot be rejected on that ground. They are the basis of belief and faith without which life can have no stable ground. This is *vedasastra sraddha* or faith in revelation. Reason comes into play in the daily affairs and concerns of life, in the regulation of life and conduct and in its proper direction and enrichment - *sadgati*. The

* D.V. Gundappa, the celebrated Kannada litterateur popularly known as D.V.G. (1887 - 1975). **Jeevana Dharma Yoga**, in Kannada. D.V.G. Kritishreni. Complete Works of D.V. Gundappa VOL II (1990), Directorate of Kannada and Culture. Government of Karnataka.

synthesis of faith and reason can alone provide the answer to the bewilderment and doubt of the individual and the society in our time. This aspect of D.V.G's work provides the key to his social philosophy of enlightened conservatism.

From another point of view, too, the commentary is unique. It is the personal life and experience of the author which forms its background. It was his life of stoical resolution and uncomplaining acceptance, one must say, defiance, of privation and hardship, the loss of the ones dearest to him, his experience as a journalist and, not the least, his attraction towards the ideals of G.K. Gokhale and his own labour for the Gokhale Institute in Bangalore which led him to reflect on the nature of public life and the place of values in the life of the individual and the community.

The Gita has been approached from various philosophical points of view but D.V.G. found that this sacred text can be a sure guide in secular and worldly affairs too. Arjuna's problem was a real problem in the like of which anyone of us may get involved any time. The Lord's advice is practical, though it is propped up by philosophical argument. The Gita is therefore *Moksha Sastra* as well as *Dharma Sastra*, a guide to self-realisation and release and a manual of ethics. It is the first aspect of the Gita which has so far received emphasis but the second needs all emphasis today. It would be only one in a thousand visitors to the temple, says the author, who can reach its golden spire; the rest may go round, have a view of the deity and derive satisfaction and solace. So is it with the Gita. One in a thousand may attain the supreme goal through the *Moksha Marga* of the Gita, but the rest are not consigned to the darkness. It is meant for all. Not for the scholars alone but for the large mass of laymen; not alone for the well-to-do, but also for those struggling against the asperities and vicissitudes of life; for men as well as women.

Everyone can derive light and instruction from this scripture for the refinement and elevation of life. A sacred regard for life, enthusiasm in the performance of duty, courage in times of adversity, conviction and tranquillity in moments of doubt - all this can be gained by us from the Gita. Dharma is near to us, well laid down and easily comprehensible; *Moksha* is a far off goal. In the last chapter of the Gita the Lord has exhorted us to follow Karma Yoga or the spiritual discipline of action and duty. To those of us who are engaged in active life, its challenges and frustrations, these are words of encouragement and strength. The due discharge of one's duty in the spirit of the Gita will, in the end and the fullness of time bring *Moksha* or realisation and release. Not all our anxiety and eagerness can hasten its arrival; it may, on the other hand, divert us from our obligations to ourselves and to the community.

Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva - all emphasising the *Nivritti Marga*, showed less concern for the secular side of life. They were more

concerned with establishing their own philosophical positions. The Gita became in their hands a partisan tract and focus of interminable sectarian debate. To D.V.G. the real question is, what is the Gita's message to life and not which school of philosophy it upholds. To the bigots of philosophical schools he would put the question, what is the nature of your spiritual realisation? Have you realised the divine in his oneness, qualified oneness or in his duality? Each realisation would be valid within its range and intellectual warfare between these positions would be futile and inconclusive.

To D.V.G. the problem of problems today is confusion and perplexity about one's duty to self and society. The Gita has answered this question for Arjuna in a particular historical and intensely personal situation. But it is a perpetually recurring situation and the Gita's answer has a perpetual relevance and validity. The problem of war and pacifism, good and evil, violence and non-violence, our duty with reference to caste and family, our tradition, Dharma and society in the context of the impact of the West and, not the least, our attitude to public affairs - these are some aspects of our present predicament. The present commentary is outstanding because it takes up all these questions and reaffirms the Gita's wisdom by answering them in its light.

In our country the social system of caste has prescribed the obligations of individuals in accordance with their inborn characteristics. D.V.G. refers in this connection not only to Manu but to Plato's **Republic** and to F.H. Bradley's **My station and its duties** in order to emphasise that the individual and his freedom are not abstractions but are inseparable from the social structure. This is the embodiment of Dharma or the ethical order of rights and duties and of the ideas of the good with reference to the community and the individual. In its specific aspects Dharma is indicated for each individual by the caste to which he belongs. But Dharma has a universal scope, too, which transcends caste and applies to all individuals equally.

D.V.G.'s exposition of the concept of duty is not just academic and theoretical. It covers the entire range of duties that are woven into the social structure. Duty is an imperative of conscience, a moral obligation expressed concretely in terms of numerous duties which we have to render for the promotion of the social good. The practical side of Dharma defined the duties of each individual according to his inborn virtue -- **sattva**, **rajas** and **tamas** -- reason, spirit and appetite, in the language of Plato. Individuals were classified according to these characteristics and formed the caste divisions of society. Our ancient classification did recognise that none of these virtues could be found in their total purity and wholeness in any individual or class. They were mixed up variously but, nevertheless, what stood forth above the rest was taken into consideration.

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Much as the caste system has been criticised, the author reminds

us that it was essentially rational, an ideal construct based on the diversity of individual talent and the need to order diversity in the interests of the general good. This is its essential rationale, not inflexible stratification, heredity or class exploitation. It is true that today caste distinctions have become blurred owing to intermarriage and, what is more, that occupations do not correspond to caste. In our present overgrown and competitive society occupations have to be taken up not according to ancient prescription but on considerations of remuneration. Most often jobs are not a matter of choice - one has to accept what the employment market offers. Thus the caste system, even if it ever existed in its ideal form, is now diluted, modified and changed beyond recognition though it has not become extinct. It cannot, however, be denied that variety of talent and specialisation of skills is an ineradicable feature of society. What is necessary today is to revive the spirit of duty that is the core of our heritage of Dharma.

In present day conditions it would be impractical to think of reviving the institution of the joint family in its old form. The pressure of occupation and employment, the search for better opportunities and prospects outside one's place of birth in any corner of the country and even abroad, make this impossible. But even if distance separates one's kin, the natural ties of affection and concern need not weaken or break. The joint family too must change in response to the demands of time but the values for which it has stood have not lost their relevance in the present context. Their reemphasis can, in fact, be a remedy for the disharmony of several homes and families.

The most important function of the family is to preserve and carry forward its exclusive virtue, the Kula Dharma. Those who are still loyal to traditional values must bear this in mind and co-operate in the discharge of this function. The question of the relation between the sexes is naturally linked with the institution of the family and its Dharma. Here, too, the progress of time and the change in the complexion of society have produced irreversible consequences. In these days of high and mounting cost of living, women are compelled to seek employment in order to augment the family income. Some may be driven to work on account of dire need. The increasing urge towards equality also drives them to compete with men in all spheres of life. The desire to have a purse of their own and "to stand on their own feet" is another motive for this competition. The traditional family is shaken by these developments but the work of time cannot be annulled. No one would suggest that the age old drudgery of women should be perpetuated. Their creative energies must be liberated and allowed the fullest scope for expression. This would be for the good of man as well as woman.

According to our tradition and Sastra husband and wife are one, inseparable and indivisible. Treating them as separate would lead to the disruption of the family. Our enthusiasm for equality must be balanced by the need for harmony and unity. How this can be done is the question before the newly civilised younger generation of men

and women. If women must work, under pressure of necessity, they must, like men and even more so, seek such employment as would be not only remunerative but also conducive to purity of life and inner satisfaction. The trouble with us today is that Karma is severed from Yoga and religion from life. As a result we find that work ethic is insufficient, if not totally lacking. There is insincerity in religion and most often it is a mask for the lack of conscience in the discharge of our duties. Competition, struggle for existence, the spread of utilitarianism and the ceaseless search for power and wealth may explain the low moral standards of personal and communal life but can hardly serve as a justification. With scathing irony and apt illustration the author asserts that it is far better to have an atheist as a public servant if he has a conscience, than a religious exhibitionist who has none. The tone of our public life can be raised only when the discharge of one's legitimate duty becomes a part of religion. "We must endeavour to bring about a correlation and complementarity between the spiritual and secular. Let there be whatever changes in our style of living or in the conditions of society. The recognition of the soul and conscience, the acknowledgement of the supremacy of Divine, faith and devotion to Dharma, and the limitation of selfishness and greed - if these four are kept alive, we can boldly assert that the teaching of the Gita will remain alive.

Selfless public work, it is true, has few rewards and is full of trials and risks. It is a test of moral strength and equanimity. Its only reward may be the satisfaction of having done your duty to the best of your conscience. The true public servant is one who is endowed with firm wisdom and looks upon praise and blame with equal eye. D.V.G. in this context refers to the twelfth chapter of the Gita, Slokas 13-20 as the very cream and nectar, the *amritakalasa* of the divine discourse, dearest to V.S. Srinivasa Sastry as the Sthitaprajna Slokas (Gita II, 54-60) were to Gandhi. He says, "when the mind was disgusted with the ways of the world, when obstructions were feared in the path of duty, when people became excited and lost their reason, when friends lost their spirit and suffered inner disquiet on any account, Sastry used to recollect these Slokas. *Tulya nindastuti* - equal and unmoved by praise or insult - is an injunction which ought to guide our public men, as he reminded us constantly. He himself followed this rule to the very letter."

Our confusion and puzzlement in regard to our duties is also due to the historical situation in which we are now placed. This is the working of Time - *apaurusheya* or the non-human factor, and has to be accepted without complaint. India's contact with the West was inevitable. D.V.G. holds the belief of the Liberals that it is a part of the design of Providence. This has shaken up our traditional beliefs and institutions and has turned us into sceptics, scoffers and atheists. But the old is not dead though badly damaged and the new has yet to take concrete shape. The right course for us would be to accept from the West whatever is conducive to our progress while preserving the

foundations and essentials of our heritage and our Dharma. We should not cling to all that is old just because it is old or run after everything that is new just because it is new. The good must be accepted whether it is old or new, whether it is foreign or native to our soil. We have to be careful that what we draw from other sources is not alien to our spirit but is helpful to its renewal and fresh expression. Such is the law of organic growth of societies and cultures. D.V.G.'s view of history and culture is at once conservative, liberal, progressive and humanistic.

The teaching of the Gita is universal as well as final. But it has to be lived and experienced again and again in order that its message may not lose any of its original force. Dharma has to be energetically maintained against Adharma. The Mahabharata war was certainly not the end of the battle between good and evil or the conclusion of the world's story. Who won and who lost in the fight, no one can decide for certain. The conflict between opposites is inherent in the life of the individual, the nation and indeed in the universe itself. This calls for constant self-examination, rededication to Dharma, enhancement of Satvic nature without diminution of life energy and the seeking after divine grace. The conflict between the elements of human nature or the three Gunas and the instability of their mutual relationship in the life of the individual and society exposes Dharma to constant peril. Man's dedication to the cause of Dharma and its experience and realisation in practice is the only meaning and justification of life.

BOOK REVIEWS

A TREASURY OF MAHAYANA SUTRAS : Ed. Garma C.C. Chang.
Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi 7. Price : Rs. 210.

Mahayana, one of the two great schools of Buddhism, is followed by great numbers in China, Japan, Korea, Tibet, Vietnam, but its scriptures have not yet been translated into modern languages to an appreciable extent. The present work, **Maharatnakuta Sutra**, is one of their five main Sutra groups and contains 49 Sutras, out of which the team of translators working on the project have selected 22 for this Treasury which is truly encyclopaedic in its scope. In the course of the Introduction, the Editor, Dr. Chang, sums up the main features of the Mahayana teaching: "Perfection and infinity of Buddhahood, and the aspiration for and the path leading to that state.. The infinity of Buddhahood is the two-in-one of great wisdom and great compassion; the way that leads to its realization is the practice of those virtues which are in consonance with this wisdom/compassion whole".

Zen is one of the subsidiary schools of Mahayana. "Zen is emptiness in action, the living **prajnaparamita**... Without proper guidance and sufficient preparation, Zen can also be dangerous and futile. By misconstruing a pseudo-experience as true enlightenment, one may develop an unwarranted self-conceit." (P. xi)

The topics covered in the Maharatnakuta Sutra are : monastic precepts (**Vinaya**), intuitive wisdom (**prajna**), good deportment, manifestation of the Tathagata's light, illusion (**maya**), ingenuity (**upaya**), nature of consciousness and the Pure Land practice. Here is an elaborate discussion of the concept of Emptiness in all its settings. There are repetitions but, it is pointed out, they are deliberate and designed "to take over the mind and run its course to reach the beyond".

The selections are grouped into 8 sections and broadly the following are their contents: Maya and Miracles, stressing the superiority of the cultivation and perfection of wisdom and compassion; whose contents are all-embracing and inexhaustible; Light

of the Tathagatha - embodying the dynamic aspects of Buddhahood; Consciousness which "is devoid of form and substance, yet it manifests itself by feelings and conceptions.. endowed with the power of wisdom. Perception, awareness, conception and memory are all comprised in the consciousness; "Virtue and Discipline, moral codes of Buddhism; Pure Land Practice; The Land is not heaven or celestial paradise," but "rather an ideal training ground for furthering one's journey toward enlightenment; " General Mahayana Doctrines; Upaya, Ingenuity in execution on the part of the Teacher.

It is to the credit of the scholars who have produced this edition that the interest of the reader is awakened and sharpened as he reads on. There is something living in the message. There are end-notes after each section clarifying concepts and phrases. A word glossary and a numerical glossary are added, making this volume an invaluable reference book on Buddhism. We look forward to more such works from the Buddhist Association of the United States. There is more than ethics in the Mahayana, there is an unmistakable breath of the spirit.

M.P. Pandit

COMMENTARIES ON "ELEMENTS OF YOGA" : By the Mother.
Sri Aurobindo Book Distribution Agency, Pondicherry - 605 002.
Price : Rs. 30.

By a singular good fortune, Sri Aurobindo's spiritual collaborator, Mirra Richard, was easily accessible to the aspirants in Pondicherry. She was a good teacher and raconteur and an expert commentator on Sri Aurobindo's Yoga. The present volume contains her explanation of Sri Aurobindo's **Elements of Yoga** for her "wednesday class" students. What sounds terse and occasionally even remote in Sri Aurobindo blossoms as detailed analysis in the **Commentaries**.

One example. When asked if a vegetarian diet helps Sadhana, Sri Aurobindo said: "It avoids some of the difficulties which the meat-eaters have, but it is not sufficient by itself." But the Mother's commentary gives us the hilarious tale of the Swedish Sadhak, the scientific history of man's appendix, the need to avoid taking extreme positions and the definite good that comes of partaking **sattvik** food when engaged in spiritual pursuits. In any case one must purify one's mental and vital conditions before worrying about physical purity:

"Don't take it as an advice not to exercise control over your desires! It isn't that at all. But what I mean is, do not try to be an angel in the body if you are not already just a little of an angel in your mind and vital; for that would dislocate you in a different way from the usual one, but not one that is better."

It is in this effortless manner that we learn a good deal about sincerity, faith, surrender, love, work and sex. Indeed, this is a handbook for everyone to lead an ideal life.

THE YOGA SUTRAS OF PATANJALI: Translated by Alistair Spearer. Motilal Banarjidas Publishers Pvt., Ltd., Delhi - 7.
Price : Rs.195.

"Patanjali Yoga" is the most valuable contribution of ancient India to the world at large. The book under review is a lucid translation of the Sutras by a close disciple of Sri Mahesha Yogi. This book is perhaps the first of its kind in that it contains 60 photographs of carvings, paintings and sculptures found in temples and caves etc., dating from 500-400 B.C. to the 13th century A.C. These highly evocative photos are directly or indirectly linked with Yoga practices and meditation and the technical skill of the sculptor and the artist capture our heart. This is the unique feature of this book.

We come across many important statements regarding efficacy and relevancy of Yoga practices to the modern world.

The author's rational and scientific explanation given to the phenomena of Siddhies - Supernormal powers cannot but convince even a sceptic but sincere student. We are advised to read the Sutras aloud. This writer asserts that each word uttered by both the bard and seer possess a tremendous and mysterious creative power.

B. Kutumba Rao

ALDOUS HUXLEY AND GEORGE ORWELL - A Comparative Study of Satire in their Novels : By Yashoda Bhat. Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi - 16. Price: Rs. 175.

Given the conditions of our life in the modern conditions, the realization that we can never approximate to any measure of ideal happiness has tended to provoke both clinicians and philosophers among creative writers to **dystopia**. When the intellectual atmosphere is vitiated with a sense of futility and helplessness against ever-enlarging forces of evil, satire has come to show things in a lurid light. Satire at the hands of both George Orwell and Aldous Huxley has gone a long way farther than Ian Jack's explanation: Satire is born of the instinct to protest; it is a protest become art. In Orwell's (Eric Blair) fiction it has been a cry of anguish and in Huxley's an intellectual exercise to understand reality. Together they added new dimensions to satire as a literary form.

Both Huxley (1894-1963) and Orwell (1903-1950) have contributed something to fiction by perceiving new dimensions in satire. The one called a "pyrrhonic aesthete" and the other a "chronicler of conscience" both have displayed dystopic vision. While Huxley blossomed into a philosopher, thanks to the intellectual legacy he received, Orwell who died young could not emerge from the slough of despond which it had been his lot to fall into.

Yashoda Bhat has clearly brought out the achievement of Huxley and pointed out with candour that Orwell was denied the time

for maturation. While Orwell could not go beyond warning mankind against degenerate socialism, Huxley matured from pyrrhonic aestheticism into perennial philosophy. Mrs. Bhat's book has been an exploration into the lesser known land of satire and dystopia, a painstaking journey with maps. Worthy daughter of a worthy father, a scholar both by temperament and profession, she richly merits Professor Chaman Nahal's assessment: "Yashoda Bhat has written a scholarly work, which will continue to be regarded as a contribution in the field of her choice."

Dr. V.V.B. Rama Rao

A STUDY OF MAHIMA BHATTA'S VYAKTIVIVEKA : By C. Rajendra Prasad, Professor of Sanskrit, University of Calicut.

Vyaktiviveka is a classic in Sanskrit literary criticism and poetics. What Anandavardhana is for the Dhvani theory, Mahima Bhatta is for the Anumiti theory, after Sri Sankara whose works are not available now. An original thinker and an undaunted critic, Mahima Bhatta throws down the gauntlet to Anandavardhana. Even celebrated Sanskrit poets did not escape his surveillance. Though the Anumiti theory finally did not hold its ground, it indirectly added to the lustre and glory of the Dhvani theory study of **Vyaktiviveka**, surely sharpens the brains of students of literary criticism.

The book under review is perhaps the first dissertation in English, and it gives a critical estimate of the text **Vyaktiviveka**. Divided into eight chapters, the book is a detailed survey of the several aspects dealt in the text in a historical and comparative method. Influence of Shaiva Philosophy is also shown, though not elaborated. It may be pointed out that there are some who maintain that the process of inference, valid or fallacious, is there unnoticed in suggestion of a meaning and inference though not invariable does not cease to be inference. Anyhow the relationship between logic and language is a subject to be studied further. The author did justice to his job and deserves all praise.

B. KUTUMBA RAO

SANSKRIT AND ENGLISH

GANGESA'S THEORY OF TRUTH. PRAMANYA (JNAPTI) VAADA :

With translation by Jitendranath Mohanty. Motilal Banarsidass, P., Ltd., Jawahar Nagar, Delhi - 7. Price: Rs. 150.

"Pramanyavada" is the second chapter of the first part viz., "Pratyaksha of Gangesas' Tattva Chintamani." It has again three subdivisions. Of these "The knowledge of truth Jnapti" is the first one. This is the text under review. The text in Sanskrit in English transliteration, divided into numbered paragraphs, is followed by English translation to which the translator has added his explanatory and critical notes.

The introductory part of this volume is a lucid, analytical, com-

parative and cohesive explication of the theory of truth, Svatah Pramanya and Paatah Pramanya vaadas as expounded by Mimamsakas, Vedantins and Naiyayikas. It is a true introduction to the subject. Even a student with nodding acquaintance of Nyaya terminology can understand it. His conclusions after an examination by the Vaadas is also very balanced. The learned Professor concludes that the rival schools in so far as the problem of truth is concerned are in a way complementary to each other. Gangesa, he says, tried his best to remove ambiguity, equivocation and relativity of the words Sva and Para and make their meaning as precise as possible. He brought out a common meaning of "Svatah Pramanya", etc.

Translation of such texts as this involving many technical terms and phraseology is indeed a hard nut to crack. The learned Professor did his job excellently.

B.K. SASTRY

SANSKRIT AND TELUGU

Tarkasamgraha of Annambhatta with Telugu commentary :
By Dr. V. Ramanujacharya. Sri Jayalaxmi Publications, 3-35
Kukatpalli, Hyderabad - 500 872. Price: Rs. 35.

A basic knowledge of logic or Tarka is a **sine qua non** for a proper understanding of Sastras and Sahitya. "Tarka Samgraha" is recognised as the best primer of Indian logic, throughout the scholastic world. The book under review contains the text in Sanskrit in Telugu script, and a lucid and exhaustive Telugu commentary. The commentator has a rare gift of explaining even the most intricate and subtle subjects with ease.

Short notes added to all the textual explanations, expound the subject still more clearly with suitable examples from day to day life also. Addendums covering over fifty pages are the most valuable portion of the book. About 90 topics - technical terms, special concepts, different theories and subtle points - are explained.

In short this invincible work is not merely a good primer of logic, but also a very nice introduction to the Indian logic in general.

B.K.SASTRY.

TELUGU

Trayi: A collection of Poems: By Janamanchi Venkataramayya. Janamanchi Prachuranalu, Rajahmundry - 5. Price Rs.20.

This is a triad of poetical pieces composed by late Janamanchi Venkataramayya, a distinguished "Bhaavuka" and poet of note of

yester years, whose forte was the sentiment of compassion and pathos. The first poem entitled "Nava Kusumanjali" contains paeans of praise and supplicating strains to the Lord of the Universe. The vicissitudes and variegated features of mundane life and their impact on the psyche and behaviour of men and women are delineated with understanding and sympathy. The style employed is one chastened by the austerity of classicism and enlivened by the vigour and vibrancy of modern sensibility.

The second piece "Amritakalasi" (Jar of Nectar) describes the various faces of poetic endeavour and how aspirants to good poetical writing should train themselves to make a mark. The poet stresses on the virtues and virtuositities of ancient poetry at its best as also on the **elan vital** of modern thinking and expression in a manner direct in appeal and abiding in its effect on the readers.

The concluding piece is a moving elegiac effusion replete with sorrow in its depth and sentimental attachment of the poet to his dead brother whose life was cut short by the icy hand of Death at a young age, setting at nought the many hopes and expectations he had about him and his achievements in life. Venkataramayya's quintessential nature and fine heart are revealed in a touching manner.

In all these pieces, the poet focuses our attention on the ultimate triune - Satyam, Sivam and Sundaram - as the true testament of any poetry rightly so called, whether ancient or modern, expressed in whatever form, and intimates us with the subtleties of introspective thoughtfulness and the quiet and discerning expression of them to maximum effect.

Pothukuchi Suryanarayana Murthy.

RIGVEDA RAHASYALU: By Dr. K.V. Raghavacharya, Gandhi Nagar, Tenali - 522 201. Price: Rs. 36.

Dr. K.V. Raghavacharya is a prodigy of multifaceted talents and achievements in Yoga and literary fields. At his ripe old age he wrote quite a new commentary in Telugu on the three Vedas and published it in five volumes. The book under review complements them and unravels some mystic secrets and gives some new interpretations that were not touched upon in the previous volumes.

Visvakarma of the Vedas, the author contends with authority, is but the Brahman of the Upanishads, and all names like Purusha, Hiran-yagarbha, and their forms culminate in Visvakarma. This is the main thesis, and the inner chord running through all the interpretations. Adducing evidence in his favour from Vidyaranya's Bhashya, he disillusions those that attribute partisan spirit to him. This in short is the main contribution of the learned author whereby he created a niche for himself in the temple of fame.

The book **Rigveda Rahasyalu** opens with the commentary on the famous Mantra "**Triambakam Yajamaha**" of proven efficacy, physical and spiritual. In the portion dealing with Vishnu Mantras etc., significance of the words "Tridha, Saptadha and Trivikrama" is explained from Yoga point of view.

The chapter dealing with Vaak and Artha is illuminating. Matter and spirit as expounded in the Vedas gives a thorough exposition. Exposition of the Naasadiya Sukta, Visvakarma Sukta, the progress of creation and a comparative study of these with Purusha Sukta, speaks volumes of the author's critical acumen. All in all herein we have a critical study of Visvakarma, Brahmadvaita and Ajataveda, practical hints to Saadhakas on Yoga and meditation, and many mystic and symbolic interpretations not expounded in other commentators in such detail with authority, reason and logic.

B. Kutumba Rao

Mutnuri Krishna Rao - Jeevitamu, Rachandalu (Mutnuri Krishna Rao -- Life and Works) : By Dr. R. Sreemannarayana Sarma.
Haritasa Publications, 6-1-2/B-53, Behind Z.P., Nalgonda.
Price : Rs. 80.

Mutnuri Krishna Rao was a doyen among the editors of Andhra Pradesh and was highly respected as a philosopher, a profound scholar and a staunch nationalist. The **Krishna Patrika** occupied a unique place under his editorship and played a very prominent role in the national struggle for independence. If Gandhiji's *Young India* played a major role in shaping the youth of the country and led them to participate in the national movement, Krishna Rao's **Krishna Patrika** was equally responsible in inspiring the young men in Andhra Pradesh. Further, the **Krishna Patrika** has done inestimable service in the country's welfare, especially in the fields of Indian art and Telugu literature. It is said that Dr. S. Radhakrishnan got inspiration for his **Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore** from Krishna Rao's dissertation about the Viswakavi.

The book under review is a doctoral thesis on the life of such a great person. The author has taken great pains in gathering the material pertaining to Krishna Rao's life and his works. The book is divided into six chapters - Krishna Rao's birth and early life; his part in the national struggle for independence; his capacity in conducting **Krishna Patrika**; his personality and individuality; his editorials; and his other writings.

Every effort has been taken by the author to furnish all details of Krishna Rao's thought and achievement. The author has succeeded, to a great extent, in presenting the multifaceted genius of Krishna Rao by quoting several incidents in Krishna Rao's life. The book would serve to inspire the young and also as a reference book of great

value, because this is the first book that has covered in detail the life and works of the greatest editor of our time.

BHAVARAJU

Teluguvari Aadi Charitramu: By T. Ramachandra Rao.

For copies. Author C/o T.V.S. Prasada Rao, C/o J.R.M. (P.O) F.C.I, 5th Floor, R.T.C. Complex, Visakhapatnam. Price Rs. 32.

This is a historical poem in Telugu. Origin and spread of Andhras form the main theme of this work. Creation of the universe according to the Vedas, Puranas and astronomy correlated with the findings of modern science, and the glory of Vishnuvardhana's kingdom are the subsidiary themes. Consisting of five Aswasas, written in classical Telugu, this poem has almost all the requisites of a good poem. Herein is a fresh contribution to Andhra history.

For the first time, perhaps, we have a Telugu Kavya with Andhranayaka Vishnu as its hero. All the main features of a good Kavya - delineation of Rasas, Alamkaras, imagination and fancy, propriety of metres and style are there. There is a message. Need of national integration, moral and spiritual values is stressed throughout. Telugu maxims and idioms are spicy. We wholeheartedly commend this work to all historians and lovers of poetry also.

B. KUTUMBA RAO

Vaana Jallu: By Smt. Achanta Sarada Devi. Published by Sahiti, 1-99/3, Lingoijiguda, Saroornagar, Hyderabad - 500 035.

Copies available at Y.V. Subrahmanyam, 26-13-63, Sanyasiraju Street, Gandhinagar, Vijayawada - 520 003. Price Rs. 15.

"Vaana Jallu" is a collection of twenty-one short stories, in Telugu, covering a variety of the aspects of woman in her daily life. In all these stories it is a woman who is either the main character or an important person. The theme of the stories contains an undercurrent of the different facets of woman's existence in the society, family and life. Each of the stories has a moral which is occasionally implicit. The human emotions, failings, desires and aspirations are depicted in simple and easily readable language. One feature which is very prominently discernible in all the stories is the absence of jealousy or hatred of anyone of the characters depicted. On the other hand, almost all the characters exude the feelings of sympathy, love, compassion, desire to be helpful to others and willingness to ignore the failings in others, and similar other noble traits.

The settings in which the stories occur are simple, easy to comprehend and appear as though they happen before one's eyes. The style of writing and narration are simple and straight. This feature adds to their readability.

Dr. B.P. Rao

AN APPEAL

I have the mandate from the merciful Lord
To get BOXING banned from the civilised world !
Boxing is for slaves, not a free man's sport
It's like cutting another man's throat !
Karate is also evil with hatred and kicking
But it's not so heinous with facial bleeding;
If we respect Gandhi, Buddha, Christ and others
We should at least abolish boxing contests;
There may still be some brutes among men
Let's hope they too will become gentlemen !

1. PLEASE BAN BOXING

Which is so Barbarous
Bleeding Blood Thro' Eyes and Nose
Disfiguring Humanity's Face !

- 2. We also solicit your valued support**
To Ban SMOKING in public places,
The proven cause for accidents and diseases
Lung infections, cancer and death.

Please do whatever is in your power
As a physical, mental or moral measure
It'll have an impact on mankind's future
And God'll bless you as a noble creature.

Before the blazing sun of Brahman
I lighted the candle of my life
And into the deep and deathless ocean
I delivered the drop of my life.

SANTIBABA
(Muchimilli)



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